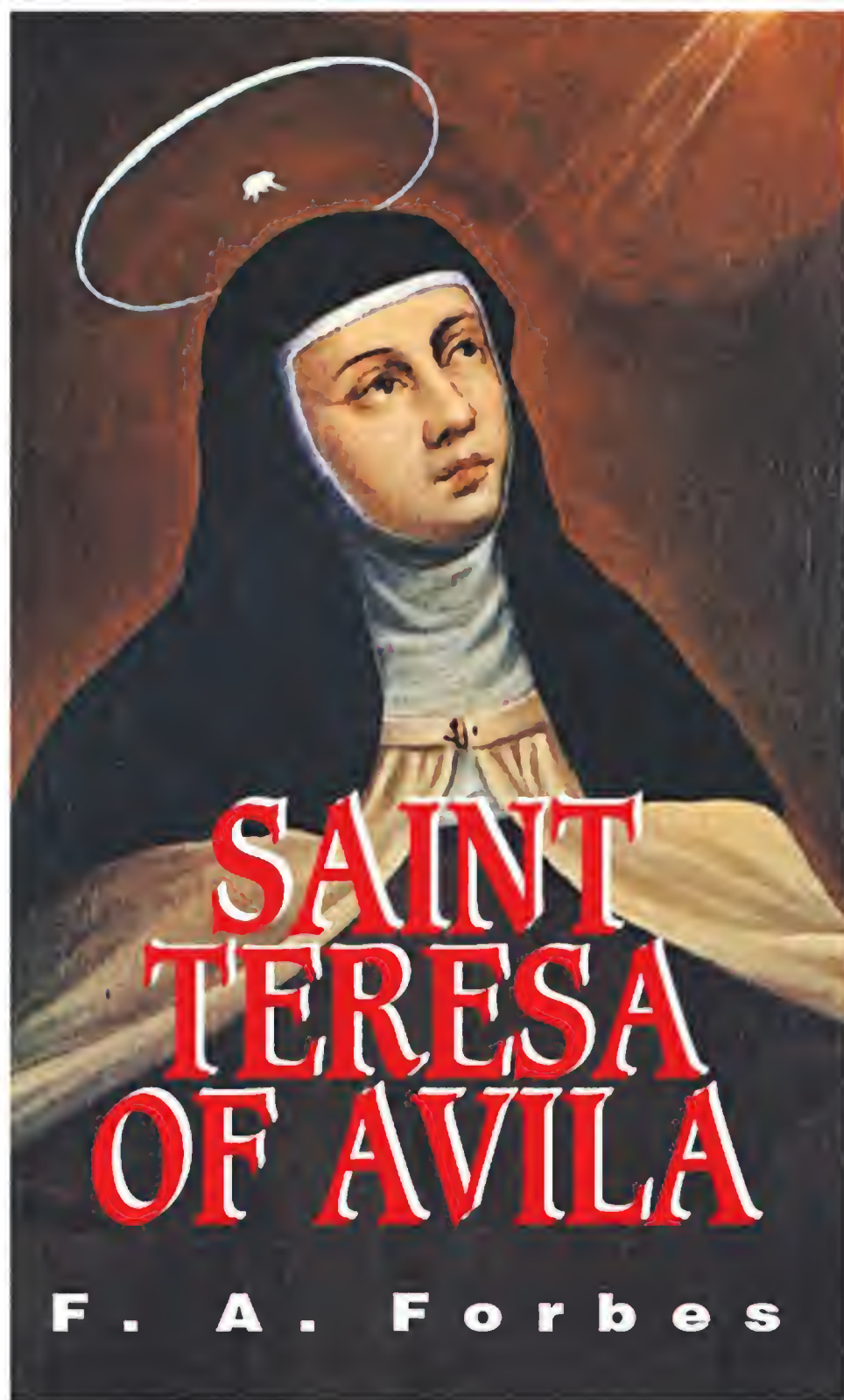




SAINT TERESA OF AVILA

F. A. Forbes

ST. TERESA OF AVILA

"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For he that will save his life, shall lose it; and he that shall lose his life for my sake, shall find it."

—Matthew 16:24-25



Arete de Jesus

St. Teresa of Jesus,
also known as St. Teresa of Avila

ST. TERESA OF AVILA

1515-1582

REFORMER OF CARMEL

By

F. A. Forbes

*"And every one that hath left house, or brethren,
or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or chil-
dren, or lands for my name's sake, shall receive
an hundredfold, and shall possess life everlasting."*
—Matthew 19:29

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“He who in the heights is the Lord, in the depths is the Beloved; above the stars He reigns;
among the lilies He loves.”

—St. Bernard

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Chapter 1

GIRLHOOD

“He who loves Thee, O my God, travels safely by the open and royal road, far from the precipice; he has scarcely stumbled at all when Thou stretchest forth Thy hand to save him.”

—*St. Teresa*

“**I**T was the little girl who made me do it,” pleaded Rodrigo de Cepeda, and although he did not know it, the excuse was as old as the world.

The “little girl” in question was Rodrigo’s seven-year-old sister Teresa, who had been seized with a burning desire for martyrdom. She wanted to see God, she passionately assured her brother, and as it was necessary to die first, martyrdom was obviously the only means to her end. Rodrigo himself had not seen the matter quite in the same light, but as Teresa was his own particular friend and playmate, and they had always done everything together, he had considered himself bound to enter into her views.

The two had set forth hand in hand at an early hour in the morning to seek the desired martyrdom in the country of the Moors, but fate had been against them. Scarcely had the children left the town of Avila when they fell into the hands of an uncle, who was returning from the country. Untouched by their tears and prayers, he promptly took them home, to the relief of the anxious mother, who was searching everywhere for the missing pair. Rodrigo’s excuse has already been given. Teresa with earnest eyes repeated her assertion: “I wanted to go to God, and one cannot do that unless one dies first.”

Doña Beatriz de Ahumada was a wise and saintly woman. She explained gently to her little daughter that for most people the road to God lies through a life spent faithfully in His service. Such a life, especially if one tried one’s best to please God in everything one did and was careful to avoid offending Him, might be quite as meritorious as the shorter way of martyrdom, which was, moreover, only for the few.

It was hard to give up all one’s dreams. Teresa consulted the Lives of the Saints and decided that the most desirable thing, after a martyr’s death, was a hermit’s life. Assisted by the faithful Rodrigo, she set to work to build a hermitage in the garden, but, as cement had not entered into their plans, the stones fell down as fast as they built them up. Teresa was at last obliged to admit sorrowfully that there seemed no more prospect of a hermit’s life than of a martyr’s death, and it was in this moment of discouragement that her mother’s words came back to her. To do one’s best to please God and not to offend Him seemed possible for anybody; she determined, therefore, to try this simple plan and with her usual energy set to work at once.

She had not very much pocket-money, but what she had she gave to the poor; she tried to say her prayers as devoutly as possible and resolved to do a kind action or say a kind word to everyone she met. It sounds like a simple program, but it took the little girl all her time and cost her many acts of self-denial—how many, those who practice it will soon discover. But she brought sunshine with her wherever she went, and she began to be supremely happy, for there is no joy like that of giving joy to others.

Doña Beatriz de Ahumada, Teresa’s sweet young mother, did her utmost to bring up her large family in the fear and the love of God. Gentle, pure and devout, she was herself their best example. Of the three sisters and nine brothers who made up the merry family party in the big house at Avila, not one in later life lost the strong faith and fervor that had been so firmly rooted in their childish hearts. Don Alonso de Cepeda, her husband, was a man whom all respected. Truthful, charitable and chivalrous, he was loved as well as obeyed by all his children. St. Teresa herself tells us that she never knew her father or mother to respect anything but goodness and that all the children in mind and heart took after their parents. “All, that is,” she adds in her humility, “but myself.”

The happy family life was soon to be broken up. When Teresa was between twelve and thirteen years old, Doña Beatriz died. In the anguish of loneliness that followed the loss of the mother to whom she had confided all her joys and sorrows, the child flung herself on her knees before the Blessed Virgin, begging her to be her mother now that she no longer had one on earth.

Of all the family, Teresa was perhaps the one who missed Doña Beatriz the most sorely and needed her guiding hand the most. Maria, her elder sister, was already grown up; Juana, the younger, scarcely more than a baby; Teresa, beautiful, brilliant and lovable, was just growing from childhood into girlhood. Her brothers adored her, and among the troop of young cousins who frequented the house she ruled as a little queen. There was no danger as long as Teresa carried out her resolution of pleasing God and never offending Him; but time wore on, and she who had inspired that resolution was no longer at hand to encourage and advise.



There was one among Teresa's cousins, a good deal older than herself, whose conversation, she tells us, did her much harm. She was a shallow and frivolous girl who thought of nothing but pleasure and amusement. By the time Teresa was fourteen, she seemed to have forgotten all her old desires of being a Saint. Whatever time could be spared from the reading of romances was spent in setting off her girlish beauty to the best advantage and enjoying the admiration that she received from all within the little home circle.

But the Blessed Virgin did not forget the child who had thrown herself at her feet on the day of her mother's death. Though Teresa was her father's darling, he was not so blinded by affection for his young daughter as not to notice the change in her behavior. He was the first to see that her prayers were more hurried, her visits to the church fewer; that she thought more of herself and less of others. He noticed with distress the unworthy friendship that was doing all the mischief. He noticed, too, that in spite of all her amusements, Teresa was less joyous than of old when she had set her childish steps to "go to God."

He took counsel with his eldest daughter, Maria, who had also remarked the change in her sister and was grieving over it in silence. She herself was soon to be married, and it was this that helped them to come to a decision, for when Maria was established in a house of her own, Teresa could not very well remain at home alone with her brothers. It was decided to send her to the Augustinian Convent to complete her education, and no sooner was the wedding over than the plan was carried out.

After the first week or two of homesickness, Teresa was heartily glad. She was already tired of the life she had been leading, and the old desires were tugging at her heartstrings. Sister Maria Briceño, the nun who was the mistress of the secular children at the convent, helped a great deal to set Teresa on the path to sanctity. It was she who opened Teresa's mind, by her holy example and advice, to the possibility of becoming a nun.

Teresa remained a year and a half at the convent in the company of this holy nun. Then, however, she became seriously ill and had to return to her father's house. When Teresa's strength was somewhat recovered, she and her father, Don Alonso, set out for Castellanos de la Canada, the home of Teresa's sister Maria. On the road lay the home of Don Pedro, Teresa's uncle, a holy old man who lived the life of a recluse and a Saint in Hortigosa. Don Alonso's stay could only be short, as he was obliged to return home on business, but Don Pedro was so delighted with Teresa that he begged his brother to leave her with him until he could come back and fetch her home himself a week or two later.

Hortigosa seemed a little dull to Teresa after the happy life she had led with her sister until Don Pedro, the greater part of whose time was passed in prayer and study, proposed one day that his niece should read aloud to him in her spare moments. Teresa, always ready to give pleasure to others, set herself bravely to a task which she did not expect to enjoy. To her surprise, however, the Epistles of St. Jerome and the writings of St. Augustine and St. Gregory, which were what her uncle chiefly preferred, turned out to be less dry than she had expected. Her quick intelligence and love of all that was noble and beautiful soon made her almost as eager for the hour of reading as Don Pedro himself, and many were the happy moments spent in the old Spanish garden at Hortigosa.

As the time went on, Don Pedro and his young niece found that they had much in common. They talked now over the daily reading, while the old desire to seek and to find God arose more strongly than ever in Teresa's heart, with a deeper understanding of the means to be taken. Already she had discovered that earthly pleasures were unsatisfying. She had learned that those who give the most to God are the happiest, and yet her nature shrank, as human nature will, from sacrifice and suffering. How was it all to end? That was the question uppermost in Teresa's heart when her father came to take her home to Avila.

Chapter 2

THE CALL OF GOD

“Let him begin by not being afraid of the Cross, and he will see how Our Lord will help him to carry it.”

—*St. Teresa*

TERESA was courageous by nature, and the long talks with her uncle in the garden at Hortigosa had reawakened all the desires of her childhood. A long life of experience had taught the old man what the child had learned by intuition, that “to get to God” was the one thing in the world worth striving for.

What was the surest way to Paradise? was the question Teresa asked herself. In spite of the fact that her nature shrank from the thought of the religious life with all that it entailed of self-sacrifice, she earnestly prayed that God would show her what He desired of her and that He would give her the strength to do it. How would it be for her in the future if she remained in the world? She had been weak once already in the presence of danger.

That the religious life was the highest life she was certain; she soon became convinced that for her at least it was the safest. As for its hardships, its self-denial, if other people had borne them, why not she? Could she not suffer a little for that Lord who had suffered so much for her? And after all, was not He Himself the strength of those who chose the rough ways for His sake?

So it was, in quiet communing with her own soul, weighing the things of earth against the things of Heaven, that Teresa chose the latter, with all that the sacrifice entailed. It remained to break the news to her father. That he would suffer Teresa knew, but, once assured that her resolve was taken, she had no doubt but that he would give her generously to God.

In this, however, she was mistaken. Don Alonso absolutely refused his consent. Entreaties were of no avail; arguments could not move him. In vain Teresa appealed to her sister Maria, to her uncle, Don Pedro; in vain her brothers, touched by her evident distress, pleaded her cause with their father. Teresa was his favorite child, said Don Alonso; he could not and would not part with her. He wished to hear no more of the matter.

But if Don Alonso was resolute, Teresa was resolute too, for God had spoken, and she saw clearly where her duty lay. Although her heart was breaking at the thought of parting from those she loved so dearly and the home life that was so sweet, she determined to take things into her own hands.



St. Teresa as a young girl entering the monastery.

Close to the town of Avila, in the midst of its quiet gardens, lay the Carmelite Convent of the Incarnation. Thither a few years before Juana Suarez, a beloved friend of Teresa's, had gone to give her young life to God in the cloister. From her Teresa had learned something of the peace and happiness of the religious life, and the prayers of Juana and of her sisters in religion had been enlisted to win Don Alonso's consent.

One of Teresa's brothers—not the faithful Rodrigo, who was already making a military career for himself in the New World, but Antonio—showed her much sympathy, for the desire of his heart also was to belong to God. Brother and sister at last resolved to leave their father's house together and to enter religion, Teresa at the Incarnation and Antonio at the Dominican monastery nearby.

Early in the morning, before the household was astir, as in the old days when Teresa had crept out with Rodrigo to seek martyrdom in the country of the Moors, the two set forth. Teresa herself tells us that the agony she felt at leaving the beloved home of her childhood was so great that she did not think the pains of death could be greater, but not for that would she pause.

Once within the convent walls a deep peace fell on her soul. On that very day, as was the custom, her beautiful hair was cut off and she was clothed with the novice's habit and veil. Kneeling before the Tabernacle, she thanked God who had given her the strength to do what she knew was His Will and offered herself to Him forever. A few days later her happiness was complete, for Don Alonso, who had been thinking things over in his heart, came himself to the Convent of the Incarnation to give his daughter the consent that he had so long withheld.

The bond between the two was now deeper and stronger than ever, ennobled as it was by sacrifice. Humbly Don Alonso asked Teresa to teach him, now that she herself had chosen the higher life, how to serve God better. The parlor of the Incarnation became for him and for Teresa's brothers the sunniest spot in Avila. There each one brought his troubles and difficulties; careers were decided on and plans discussed for the future; the bright young novice had help and advice for all. Even Antonio would come from time to time from his monastery to talk about the spiritual life with the sister who had helped him so much to understand its meaning during their last days at home together. As for the little Juana, Don Alonso brought her himself to the convent, that her education might be carried on under Teresa's care.

If the struggle was still sometimes keen in the novice's heart, no one was allowed to suspect it. She performed her humble duties with such a radiant face that everyone who saw her was cheered by the sight. She prayed with so much fervor and atoned for her mistakes with so much humility that her sisters used sometimes to wonder what the little novice would become in later life. Her greatest joy was in helping others. She was always on the look-out for such little opportunities, but the old and the infirm were her special care.

When Teresa knelt at her bedside at night, if her chances of practicing charity throughout the day had been few, she would grieve over it and ask God's pardon. Sometimes it would happen at that very moment that an uncertain footfall would pass her door, and she would know that in the darkness one of the sisters was groping her way to her cell. Then Teresa would spring up and, taking a little lamp in her hand, hasten to light her on her way, rejoicing that God had sent her the chance of doing one more kind action before she slept.

So highly was her thoughtfulness for others appreciated that she was named to help in the infirmary, an employment usually given to the professed alone. She loved the sick, and they loved her. They knew that they could ask any service of her, and that she was never weary of waiting on them, however tiring and unpleasant to her nature the duties might be. There was one among them who suffered from a terrible disease and whose poor body was a mass of open sores. Teresa, who knew that many of the sisters, in spite of themselves, shrank from approaching her, made herself her special nurse. Not content with dressing the gaping wounds, she would sit beside her patient by the hour, kiss her hands and do everything she could to show that, far from being a mortification to serve her, it was her greatest joy. Filled with admiration at the courage and resignation with which the sufferer bore her terrible malady, Teresa would ask God that if ever she herself should be attacked with illness, she might have grace to bear it with the same love and patience.

It seemed as if God had heard her prayer, for not long after Teresa herself began to fail in health. At first she took no notice of the continual sickness and weariness that assailed her, for she was not given to thinking about her own ailments. The day of her profession was drawing nigh, and everything else was forgotten in the thought that she would soon belong wholly to Our Lord.

But the happy day came and passed, and Teresa grew rather worse than better. Her superiors took alarm; treatment after treatment was tried, but in vain. It was now her turn to accept the services of others and to practice patience. The days and nights in the infirmary were long for one so young and normally so full of life and energy. The dear community life of work and prayer that she loved so much had to be given up; she was too weak even to read.

Yet, as Teresa lay helpless on her bed and contrasted the old happy days with the present time of suffering, there were no complaints, even in her own heart. "Since I have received good things from my Lord," she would say gently, "why not also evil?" Her sisters were touched at the sight of the cheerful content that never seemed to waver. As of old, she thought of others more than of herself and did her best to give as little trouble as possible.

Don Alonso, in great distress, sent physician after physician to see his daughter, but all declared that nothing could be done; the illness was incurable. At last, in despair, he resolved to take her to a woman doctor who had a reputation for working wonderful cures. The nuns of the Convent of the Incarnation were not cloistered but were allowed to go and visit their intimate friends and relations; there would be therefore no difficulty in taking Teresa to Bézédas, where the woman lived. Juana Suarez, the friend of Teresa's girlhood, was permitted to go with her, for the nuns were anxious to do all they could for one whom they felt certain they would never see again.

In the early winter the three set out together for Hortigosa, the first stage on their journey. The treatment was not to begin until the spring, but Don Alonso had planned that Teresa should spend the winter months with her sister Maria. Since the air of Castellanos had done her so much good before, who could tell what it might not do again? At all events, it was worth trying.

Chapter 3

THE GREAT MISTAKE

“They who would follow Christ, if they do not wish to be lost, must walk in the way He walked Himself.”

—*St. Teresa*

IF Don Pedro was delighted to see his niece clothed in the religious habit, he was no less distressed at her condition. He surrounded her with every care during her short stay at Hortigosa, and the little book on prayer which he gave her as a parting gift soon became Teresa's chief treasure. The long hours of suffering and weakness, during which she could neither work nor read, she resolved to spend in a union with God which should be closer than ever. It was the only way, as she had learned by experience, to be cheerful and patient when in continual pain. Now, with the help of her uncle's little book, she set to work to make prayer the chief occupation of her life.

She used to try, Teresa tells us, to imagine Jesus Christ her Lord present within her soul, and with a loving heart to follow Him through all the mysteries of His earthly life, praying the while that she might serve Him to the utmost of her power. Her father and sister, knowing that she now belonged to God and not to them, were careful not to disturb her; but if they were thoughtful of her, she too was thoughtful of them. When they were with her, no matter how much she might be suffering, she was always gay and merry, and the greatest treat for Maria's two little children was to be allowed to visit their aunt.

So the months wore on; but to Don Alonso's grief, Teresa grew no better. The air of Castellanos, that was to work such marvels, seemed to have lost its magic. When the early spring arrived and it was time to set out for Bézédas, the journey had to be taken more slowly than ever, for Teresa was so weak that even the most careful movement brought on alarming fainting fits. The quack doctor from whose skill Don Alonso had hoped so much turned out to be an ignorant woman, whose violent remedies were utterly unsuited to anyone in Teresa's condition. Under her treatment the invalid lost the last remnants of strength that she possessed. Racked with pain from head to foot, burning with fever and wasted to a skeleton, she was brought back to Avila by her heartbroken father in a condition more dead than alive.

It was the Vigil of the Assumption, and Teresa wished to make her Confession. Her eagerness, however, alarmed Don Alonso, who feared that it might be prompted by the thought that she was dying. In order, as he imagined, to reassure her and to convince her that there was no real danger, he refused to send for a priest. That very night Teresa became unconscious and remained thus for four days. It was reported in the town that she was dead; her grave was dug at the Convent of the Incarnation, and two sisters were sent to watch by her coffin. Don Alonso alone refused to give up hope, even when the doctor despaired. Reproaching himself bitterly for his refusal to grant Teresa's last desire, he knelt night and day by her bedside, chafing her cold hands in his and beseeching God that she might not die without the Sacraments, through his fault. His prayer was granted. On the fourth day Teresa opened her eyes, smiled at her father and her brothers, who were gathered round her bed, and repeated her request. This time the poor father did not hesitate; the priest was sent for at once.

Teresa made her Confession and received her Lord with tears of joy, after which the cruel sufferings, for a moment interrupted, began again more violently than ever. For nearly seven months she lay in agony, expressing only one desire—to return to her convent. Don Alonso at last yielded to her wish, and she was transported with the greatest care to the Incarnation, an object of pity to all who beheld her. For eight months more she remained unable to move, at the end of which time, to her great joy, she was able to crawl about on her hands and knees.

During these weary days of suffering and helplessness, prayer was her one comfort and charity her only thought. It was said that in her presence the absent were always safe, for she would allow nothing to be said against them. Her cheerful patience astonished her sisters; they could not understand how it could endure amid such sufferings. A talk with her was like a tonic for those who were in difficulties or sad at heart.

The doctors had decided that the paralysis was incurable; but to the young nun of twenty-four, who had already suffered so much and who lay looking forward to a life of helpless inaction, there came a great longing to work for Our Lord as well as

to suffer for Him. Earthly doctors had failed her; she would appeal to the heavenly. She had always had a great devotion to St. Joseph, and it was to him she now addressed herself. "To other Saints," she wrote in later life, "Our Lord seems to have given grace to succor men in some special necessity, but to this glorious Saint, I know by experience, to help us in all. He helps in a special way those souls who commend themselves to him."

The answer to her prayer was a complete cure.

Teresa had asked for health that she might serve God better, and He had granted her request. The time had come to put into practice all that had been planned during the hours of prayer and suffering.

Looking back on the past in later years, Teresa declared that she had been wrong in thinking that she could serve God better in health than in sickness. "He knows what is for our good," she says, "and His Holy Will is best." For in spite of all her desires, sixteen years were to pass before, leaving the things of earth behind her, she was to reach those heights of holiness to which God had called her.

The Rule of the Order of Mount Carmel, drawn up by St. Albert, Patriarch of Jerusalem, on a foundation much older still, prescribed silence, solitude, prayer and perpetual abstinence from meat. Toward the end of the fourteenth century, when the Great Schism had brought with it a relaxation of the religious orders, men began to grow weary of austerity, and the Carmelites obtained from the Pope a mitigation or softening of their Rule. The severe fasts and abstinences were done away with, enclosure was given up and the spirit of prayer that had been the characteristic of the Order rapidly declined.

The Convent of the Incarnation had been founded lately under the mitigated Rule; the nuns knew no other. They led good, holy lives, but not very different from those which they might have led as good Catholics in the world. Visitors were allowed at all hours, the religious were permitted to leave the convent to stay with friends and relations, silence was not observed and abstinence from meat not practiced. The friends and families of the nuns availed themselves largely of their opportunities and frequented the parlors and the garden of the convent.

Teresa, warm of heart and affectionate by nature, could not refuse to receive the many visitors who flocked to see her on her recovery, conscious though she was that such visits did not tend to a spirit of prayer and recollection. People declared that she did them good and helped them, which was undoubtedly true, for she had the gift of leading souls to God. Other nuns whose virtue she admired did the same thing, she argued to herself; it was the custom of the convent. But all souls are not called to the same perfection, and the results soon made themselves felt in Teresa's spiritual life. The prayer and union with God which she had practiced in the infirmary began to be impossible under these new conditions, amid the distractions caused by these incessant visits. Teresa began to think that it would be better for her, imperfect as she was, to content herself with the vocal prayers prescribed by the Rule. Why should she aspire to a closer union with God than those among whom she lived?

Yet she could not be at rest, for the voice of God spoke continually in her soul, urging her to be faithful to her earlier aspirations. Although a faithful and fervent religious in the eyes of all, Teresa knew in her own heart how far she fell short of the perfection to which God was calling her. Neither was she without warning, for one day when talking with a friend whose acquaintance she had lately made, she became suddenly aware of a horrible toad-like creature crawling rapidly toward her. On another occasion while she was with the same person, Our Lord appeared to her, His sad and reproachful face haunting her for long days afterward.

Don Alonso, who had taken to heart Teresa's instructions of earlier days, was advancing rapidly in the way of prayer and holiness. Smitten to the heart by the veneration with which he regarded her, Teresa told him that she no longer prayed as of old, but she did not disturb him in his belief that it was her health, which was still far from good, that prevented her. She little knew that the death of her beloved father was to be the beginning of her own new life. Suddenly struck down with a dangerous illness, he sent an imploring message to his best-beloved daughter to come to his bedside. Teresa, with the permission of her superiors, hastened to give him the comfort he desired. Though in great pain, the holy old man thought only of his soul and of the life to come and bore his sufferings with heroic patience.

The end was near, and it was at her father's deathbed that Teresa found courage for the fight. She had been much struck by the fervor and piety of the Dominican friar who had assisted Don Alonso in his last hours, and she determined to have recourse to him for the needs of her own soul. He understood at once to what heights God had called her. In the first place, he told her, she must hold fast to mental prayer and under no condition give it up.

Teresa obeyed; but it was hard to preserve the recollection necessary for that intimate communion with God in the midst of the distractions to which the relations with her numerous friends exposed her. For years the conflict raged in her soul. She had not the strength to give up her friendships, although she felt that God desired that of her. The hours of prayer were hours of anguish, sometimes spent in a frenzied longing for the clock to strike, sometimes in tears and contrition at the thought of her own weakness. Teresa was nearly forty years old when the grace of God at last triumphed in her soul.

Chapter 4

CHRIST OR SATAN?

“O Life of all lives, Thou slayest none that put their trust in Thee and seek Thy friendship.”

—*St. Teresa*

IT has been said that God will never allow Himself to be outdone in generosity. For fourteen years, in spite of dryness, weariness and ill health, Teresa persevered in prayer. After a long struggle, very hard to her affectionate nature, she had given up all the earthly ties to which she clung. The reward followed closely on the sacrifice. God began to reveal Himself to her soul with an ever-increasing intimacy, while the sense of His continual presence never left her. It was no longer hard to recollect herself; the thought of God was always in her heart. Her soul, as she herself tells us, lost itself in God; she no longer lived, but God lived in her.

It was about this time that St. Francis Borgia, General of the Spanish Province of the Jesuits, resolved to found a Jesuit College in Avila. Rumors of the holiness of the two sons of St. Ignatius who had been sent there to inaugurate the work came to the ears of Teresa, who conceived an ardent desire to seek their counsel and advice. The very graces which God was showering upon her made her uneasy. In her humility she asked herself if she, a sinner, were not unworthy of such favors, and she feared lest the devil might be deceiving her.

Teresa had some reasons for her misgivings. Not long before, the visions and prophecies of a certain Franciscan nun of Cordova had been the wonder and admiration of the whole country. After having been regarded as a Saint for thirty years, this woman, suddenly touched by grace, had confessed that her life had been a deception and her visions imaginary, and she was now expiating her sins in bitter sorrow in a convent of her Order. If one nun could be so deceived, thought Teresa, why not another? Convinced as she was of her own unworthiness, the extraordinary graces which God had vouchsafed to her only served to alarm her.

Teresa had heard that the Jesuits were remarkable for their wisdom and skill in the guidance of souls and she longed to have recourse to them to set her doubts at rest. But humility interfered once more. “I did not think myself fit to speak to them,” says the Saint, and the desire had to await its fulfillment. There lived in Avila a holy old man who was dear to Teresa, not only on account of the purity of his life, but because he had been the intimate friend of her father. His name was Don Francisco de Salcedo, and to him Teresa resolved to confide her difficulty. Having heard her to the end, he proposed that she should submit the case to Doctor Gaspar Daza, a learned theologian and a friend of his own.

The interview which resulted was not very satisfactory. Dr. Daza had not time to undertake the direction of the Saint and could only give her some general advice, while Teresa, who had not as yet that understanding of spiritual things which was to be her characteristic in later years, found great difficulty in making her explanation clear. An internal intuition, moreover, told her that this was not the man to help her.

Don Francisco, greatly disappointed at the failure of his enterprise, did his best to console her and suggested that she should write an account of her spiritual experiences for Dr. Daza to read. This, to the best of her ability, she did, and gave the manuscript to her old friend. The consequences were disastrous; Don Francisco returned in the greatest distress. Dr. Daza had read her account, he told her, and had come to the conclusion, in which he himself was obliged to concur, that her consolations were the work of the evil one. The best thing for her to do would be to put herself immediately under the direction of a Jesuit.

Teresa was heartbroken; she did not even dare to pray, for fear that the consolation she might receive would be of the devil, and Father de Padranos was asked to come at once to the convent to hear her Confession.

To the Jesuit the situation was perfectly clear: he saw the grace of God working in a soul that was pure, humble and straightforward. What was going on in her, he said, was the work of the Spirit of God; she was destined for great graces and must do all in her power to correspond with them. She was to abandon herself with trust and confidence wholly into God’s hands.

Teresa breathed again; anguish was succeeded by peace and joy, but her doubts were to be still further set at rest. St. Francis Borgia, the General of the Jesuits, came soon afterward to Avila to visit the College of St. Giles, and at Father de Padranos' request went to the Incarnation to see her. The Spirit of God was leading her, was his verdict; she might safely follow Its guidance. Unfortunately for Teresa's future peace of mind, Father Juan de Padranos was shortly afterward called away from Avila.

Meanwhile, the number of nuns in the Convent of the Incarnation was increasing rapidly. Finances did not increase at the same rate, hence it was difficult to keep up the house without continually appealing to the families of the nuns for help. In order to relieve the convent of the increasing burden, the sisters were encouraged more and more to visit their friends and relations and were even ordered to accept all invitations.

Teresa deplored the want of enclosure with all her heart. Nothing was more contrary to her inclinations than such visiting; but it was the custom of the house, and she was obliged to obey. While staying with one of her cousins she had made the acquaintance of Doña Guiomar de Ulloa, a young widow of twenty-five who, having lately lost her husband, had resolved to seek consolation in God alone. Attracted by Teresa's charm of manner no less than by her holiness, Doña Guiomar had confided to her her hopes and fears for the future, and a strong and supernatural friendship had arisen between them. When the Saint returned to her convent it was only to hear that Doña Guiomar had sought and obtained permission to invite her to her own house a few months later.

When the two friends met Teresa was struck once more by the progress that Doña Guiomar had made in the spiritual life. It was entirely owing, she explained later, to the direction of Father Baltasar Alvarez, a young Jesuit whose holiness was known to the whole town. Teresa, who desired to share the benefit of such a guidance, asked Father Baltasar to admit her among the number of his penitents, and she found in him a worthy successor to Father Juan de Padranos. The visit over, Teresa returned to the Convent of the Incarnation rejoicing in the thought that she would be free, for a time at least, to live in peace with God in her own little cell.

But the people of Avila had begun to talk about the extraordinary graces that were being showered on this nun whom they had known from girlhood. Dr. Daza was still convinced that he had been right in his judgment, and Don Francisco de Salcedo had too much confidence in his friend's learning to believe that he could have been mistaken. Both were sincerely interested in Teresa's welfare and were extremely anxious about her condition. In their distress they talked rather indiscreetly about things which, although they did not come under the seal of Confession, had been mentioned in confidence. Some people went so far even as to warn Father Baltasar Alvarez to be on his guard against his penitent.

Although in his heart of hearts the Jesuit was convinced that God alone was working in Teresa's soul, he was humble enough to think that he might be mistaken. He had a great regard for both Gaspar Daza and Francisco de Salcedo; it was just possible that they might be right and he wrong. In any case, the test was easy: humility and obedience, which are always present when God is working in a soul, are conspicuously absent when the work is of the devil. Father Baltasar let it seem to Teresa that he was not sure himself if she were not deceived by the evil one. In any case, he told her, if she were careful not to offend God, her consolations, even if they were the work of Satan, would not be able to hurt her. He ordered her to pray less, to resist with all her might her supernatural attractions, and he deprived her for nearly three weeks of Holy Communion.

"There was no comfort for me either in Heaven or on earth!" cried the Saint in her anguish; never had she suffered so cruelly. But when the cloud was darkest the Divine voice spoke in her soul. "Be not afraid," it said, "it is I; I will not abandon thee; fear not."

"O my Lord, how true a Friend Thou art!" she cried; for all was now easy to bear. As for Father Baltasar, while more and more convinced that he had to deal with a Saint, his direction increased in rigor. The thought one day suggested itself to Teresa to choose another director, who would let her pray in peace, but her Divine Master reproved her severely. "Do not flatter thyself thou art obedient," He said, "if thou art not prepared to suffer." Presently her superiors forbade her to read the spiritual books which helped her soul the most. This tried her sorely, but Our Lord consoled her. "Do not grieve, My daughter," He said; "I will give thee a living book." She soon learned what He meant.

One day while praying Teresa saw in a vision Jesus Christ at her side, after which it seemed to her that His invisible presence never left her. When she prayed He constantly appeared to her, ravishing her soul to ecstasy. It was impossible to

hide what was passing; the nuns discussed it with their friends and people began to talk of exorcising the Saint to deliver her from the deceits of the devil.

About this time Father Baltasar Alvarez left Avila, recommending to Teresa during his absence another confessor, who, on his first interview with her, decided also that her visions were the work of Satan. She must make the Sign of the Cross, he told her, whenever they appeared, and repulse the evil one with a gesture of contempt and horror. Teresa herself could not doubt that it was Our Lord whom she saw and with whom she spoke; how could she bring herself to treat Him with horror and contempt? Trembling, she asked herself the question, but to her there was only one answer. Obedience was His favorite virtue; He had been obedient unto death. But when the vision came again a few days later, even as she made the Sign of the Cross and the prescribed gesture of contempt, she fell at Our Lord's feet, beseeching Him with tears to pardon her. "Thou hast done well to obey," was the answer; "I will make the truth known."

Chapter 5

PROBATION

“O my soul’s Lord, who can find words to describe what Thou art to those who trust in thee?”

—*St. Teresa*

TERESA’S outward life at this time was like that of any other nun of the Incarnation. Prayer and work and the exercises of the common life succeeded each other as usual. She was more forgetful of self and thoughtful for others than anyone else in the house, but she had always been so. The visions and ecstasies with which God favored her took place during the quiet hours of prayer in her own oratory, but this state of things was not to last.

One day as the Saint knelt absorbed in God, she beheld at her side the vision of an Angel whose face shone like the sun. In his hand he held a golden dart, the point of which was all on fire, and which he plunged several times into her heart. The love of God, Teresa tells us, increased so much in her soul after this miraculous transfixion that she longed to die in order to be no more separated from her Divine Master. Her ecstasies and visions increased, and it became harder than ever to hide the extraordinary graces with which she was favored. Sometimes in the convent chapel before the whole community she would be rapt in ecstasy and raised above the ground, while the supernatural beauty of her face struck everyone with awe. Strange lights shone about her as she prayed, and were seen by many.

Teresa, whose one desire was to remain hidden and unnoticed, implored of God that He would cease to bestow on her these outward manifestations of His favor. She sought as much as possible the solitude of her own cell, where no one could be witness of what passed between her and her Divine Lord. Longing to do something for His glory, to give herself to Him as He had given Himself to her and to satisfy the burning love of her heart, she made, with her director’s permission, a vow to do in all things what would be most pleasing to His Majesty.

For many years God had been preparing Teresa for the work which He had for her to do. The supreme test was yet to come; her soul was to be tried as gold is tried in the fire. The lights died out and the consolations faded away. Suffering of soul succeeded to suffering of body; all that had passed in her hours of ecstasy seemed but the shadow of a dream. Doubts, fears and scruples assailed her. It seemed to her that she was the vilest of sinners—that, deceived herself, she was deceiving others. So did the evil one seek to drive her to despair—yet was he defeated in his attempt. For He who had been blessed in the time of joy was blessed also in the time of sorrow. Teresa clung to the thought of His mercy and praised His Holy Name.

The devil, jealous of the work of God, only redoubled his attacks. Hideous apparitions beset her, but Teresa, with the cross in her hand, defied the powers of evil. “They can do nothing without Christ’s permission,” she would say contemptuously. “What have we to fear?”

If the good people of Avila had been anxious before, they were much more anxious now, for rumors of what was passing travelled through the nuns of the Incarnation. Certain friends went as far as to tell Teresa that she was possessed, but she answered them with gentleness and humility: “You have only to look at the results. I was poor, and God has made me rich; everybody must see how He has changed me. Never will I believe that the devil could have given me strength to fight against my faults and to practice the opposite virtues. God has given me courage to do and bear all things for His sake. I was weak, and He has made me strong.”

The truth of her words could not be denied, and God Himself was to bear testimony to it.

Although there were many Saints in Spain at that time, none was more revered than St. Peter of Alcantara, a Franciscan friar who had lived a rigorous life of prayer, fasting and penance, devoting himself entirely to the service of God and the salvation of sinners. To his eyes the veils that hide the unseen were transparent, and he could read men’s souls like a book. The news reached Doña Guiomar that the holy Franciscan was engaged in a visitation of his order which would bring him to Avila, and she determined that Teresa should see him.

It was not difficult to obtain permission to take her away from the convent for a short visit, and the plan was immediately

carried into execution. The two Saints understood each other at once. All Teresa's difficulties were smoothed away and her doubts completely set at rest. God and God alone was working in her, said St. Peter of Alcantara; she need have no fear.

But the holy old man was not satisfied with this. Rumors of the gossip in the town had reached his ears, and he went straight to Father Baltasar Alvarez, with whom he had a long interview and from whom he heard much of Teresa's obedience and humility. His next visit was to Don Francisco de Salcedo, whom he succeeded in convincing of the truth, and he even managed to persuade Dr. Daza that he had been mistaken. Before leaving Avila he bade Teresa write to him whenever she wanted counsel and advice and promised to do all that he could to help her.

Consoled and strengthened, Teresa was ready now to bear the worst. The verdict of St. Peter of Alcantara was not without its effects in Avila. The gossip died down, and the nuns of the Incarnation at last began to believe that they might possibly have a Saint in their midst.

It was about this time that Teresa had a fearful vision in which God showed her the place in Hell that would have been hers had she been unfaithful to His inspirations. "All the horrors I had ever seen," cries the Saint, "were nothing compared to that; I have no words to express it. The most painful thing of all was the certainty that such torment is eternal, that there is no hope, no end to it. It only lasted a moment, but when I think of it, my blood freezes in my veins."

After the vision came the thought that souls, created like hers to know and love God, were daily falling into that place of torment. "What can I do, O my Lord, to save them?" she cried in anguish.

The answer came in a secret inspiration.

A desire took shape in Teresa's heart to lead a more mortified religious life, to keep the Rule of Mount Carmel in all its old perfection, to pray day and night as the Carmelites had prayed of old, before the Mitigated Rule had made their life so easy. She pictured to herself a convent, poor as the cave of Bethlehem, secluded, silent, full of ardent souls who lived for God's glory and who prayed for the work of holy Church and for the souls of sinners. Such was her dream—how far away it seemed!

* * * * *

It was the feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, and the guests that had been taking part in the festivities at the convent were dispersing to their homes. The day was drawing to a close, and Teresa was hoping for a quiet hour in her oratory when Juana Suarez, the friend of her girlhood, came to her cell for a little talk. She was soon followed by Anne and Iñez de Tapia, two cousins of Teresa's, lately professed, and two of her nieces who were being brought up at the convent—Maria and Leonora de Ocampo.

The conversation went briskly; Maria de Ocampo, a beautiful girl, whose charms were set off to the best advantage, was full of questions about the religious life. The two young nuns spoke of the Feast, and of the difficulty of preserving recollection among so many visitors.

"Very well, then," said Maria decidedly, "let all of us who are here go to some other place where we can live a solitary life like hermits; if we had courage to do that, we could found a convent." Teresa, surprised at such a suggestion from such a quarter, asked where the money was to come from. "From me," retorted Maria promptly; "I will give part of my dowry." Her sister was enchanted, the two young nuns not less so. Juana Suarez alone threw cold water on the scheme; the difficulties, she thought, would be too great. The question was discussed with all the enthusiasm of youth; plans were made and the little convent built—at least in the imagination of the company.

The next day when Doña Guiomar came to the convent, Teresa laughingly told her of the project of her young kinswomen. "It is the inspiration of God," said Doña Guiomar, "and I will help you to carry it out. Let us pray over it until we can see what to do."

For Teresa the most essential thing was to know God's will in the matter, and she earnestly prayed that He would make it clear. One morning after Holy Communion, she tells us, Our Lord appeared to her and bade her take the work to heart. The new convent was to be dedicated to St. Joseph, and Teresa was to consult Father Baltasar Alvarez and tell him what had passed. The latter suggested that she should ask the advice of Father Angel de Salazar, Provincial of the Carmelites, whereupon Doña

Guiomar undertook to lay their plans before him. Meanwhile Teresa wrote to St. Peter of Alcantara, St. Francis Borgia and the Dominican St. Louis Bertrand to ask their counsel. The reply was unanimous; the three Saints blessed the project and bade Teresa accomplish it as quickly as possible. Doña Guiomar was equally successful in her embassy; the Provincial was encouraging and promised to take the new convent under his charge.

It seemed as if there was nothing left but to find a house and to found the convent; but this was not so easy. The nuns of the Incarnation, as well as the people of Avila, were quite contented with the Mitigated Rule and were highly indignant at the idea that it could be improved upon. What was the use, they asked, of going back to the Primitive Rule with all its hardships, its solitude and silence? The idea was received with ridicule. “Let Teresa keep quiet in her own convent,” said the townspeople, “instead of trying to turn everything upside down; and let Doña Guiomar mind her own business and not get herself talked about.”

Others said that Teresa was mad to think of leaving a convent where she was so comfortable. The storm of tongues grew apace; nuns, priests and people were against the idea. Every movement of the two friends was watched and remarked upon; the whole town was in a tumult. But Teresa was used to suffering and contradiction. On a little bookmark that she kept in her breviary she had written the following words. They were the secret of her calm:

“Let nothing trouble thee;
Let nothing affright thee.
All things pass away;
God alone changes not;
Patience obtains all things.
To him who possesses God
Nothing is wanting;
God alone suffices.”

It was necessary to seek in Avila itself a wise counselor who would give them his support. They found him in Father Pedro Ibañez, first theologian of the Convent of St. Dominic. He had been professor at the University of Salamanca and was a great student; he was, moreover, revered in Avila as a Saint. When Teresa and Doña Guiomar exposed their plans to him, he asked for a week to think it over and spent the time in prayer. Certain people of the town warned him to have nothing to do with the project, but he had sought a better Counselor. When Teresa and Doña Guiomar returned a week later, the verdict was clear and decisive. Father Pedro would give them all the help in his power, for the work was of God.

Chapter 6

THE DIVINE MISSION

“With so good a Friend and Captain ever present, Himself the first to suffer, everything can be borne. He helps, He strengthens, He never fails; He is the true Friend.”

—*St. Teresa.*

THE most influential man in Avila having pronounced himself in favor of Teresa's enterprise, several others took courage to come forward to her assistance. Don Francisco de Salcedo and Gaspar Daza offered to do all in their power to help, and some of the greatest enemies of the scheme were converted. An unassuming little house on the outskirts of the town was for sale; negotiations were at once set on foot to buy it.

But things were not destined to go so smoothly. As the excitement died down in the town, it increased in the Convent of the Incarnation. Teresa's desire to found a convent of the Primitive Rule was looked upon by the nuns as a personal affront to themselves. Some even suggested that Teresa should be kept in confinement; others, but not many, took her part; the discussions grew bitter. Complaint after complaint was sent to the Provincial, who began to regret that he had ever consented to befriend the undertaking. Weary at last of the continual worry, he told Teresa that he considered himself obliged to withdraw his permission to found, urging as his reason that the opposition was too great and that the money promised was not sufficient. Teresa, undaunted, told Father Baltasar of the refusal and asked him what she should do. She was to obey, he answered, and give up all thought of the foundation.

It seemed for the moment as if Teresa's efforts and sufferings had been in vain, but her faith was great. If it was God's will that the convent should be founded, she reflected, this would certainly be done. In the meantime, her business was obedience, and she resolved to practice it as perfectly as possible. Neither in word nor in thought would she allow herself to revert to the project that had been so dear to her heart; in silence and in peace she went about her usual work at the convent. When Father Ibañez came to see her she spoke to him of God and of the spiritual life, but not one word on the subject of the foundation. It seemed as if she had completely forgotten that such an idea had ever existed, but Father Ibañez knew that this could not be so and was greatly impressed by her obedience.

Although Teresa had obeyed, her friends were under no such obligation. Doña Guiomar, at Father Ibañez' suggestion, had applied to Rome for a brief authorizing the foundation; Don Francisco and Gaspar Daza were also at work, and Teresa's docility seemed to be bringing a blessing on their endeavors.

Six months had passed when Father Ibañez suddenly resolved to leave Avila to devote himself in silence and solitude to a life of prayer. His departure seemed a serious loss to the little group of workers, but God was to provide for Teresa another friend, who was destined to take his place.

The rector of the College of St. Giles was shortly afterward withdrawn, and Father Gaspar de Salazar, a strong, wise and holy man, was put in his place. Father Baltasar Alvarez hastened to seek his advice with regard to St. Teresa, who was presently ordered to give the rector an account of her soul and of the supernatural manifestations that she had received.

This was a thing which the Saint disliked extremely, but no sooner had she entered the confessional than she was at peace. A secret intuition that Father Gaspar would understand and help her made everything easy.

Teresa was not mistaken. God had given Father Gaspar a special grace for the reading of souls. He bade the Saint's confessor give her more liberty and fear nothing; the Spirit of God was there. A little later the Saint received an order from Our Lord to speak to Father Gaspar on the subject of the new foundation. “Bid him meditate,” said her Divine Master, “on the words, ‘O Lord, how great are Thy works! Thy thoughts are exceeding deep.’” Father de Salazar did so, and during his prayer he saw the whole enterprise in the light of God. That very day he told Teresa that the Divine Will had been made known to him; she must go on with the undertaking.

It was agreed that they should work in secret, for the nuns of the Incarnation had prejudiced the Provincial so strongly against the project that it would have been worse than useless to appeal to him again. The state of affairs seemed anything but

promising. Teresa was watched and distrusted by her sisters in religion; the required funds were not forthcoming; there was much to be done, and she alone could do it. "Ah, my beloved Master," she cried, "why do You command me to do impossible things? What can I do? What am I good for? I have neither money nor knowledge."

But there is something more necessary than either money or knowledge to succeed in God's work, and that is holiness. At her Saviour's feet Teresa found courage to endure for her Lord's sake all the difficulties that lay before her.

Her first step was to write to her sister Juana, married to a young nobleman of Alba, Don Juan de Ovalle, to ask if her husband could come to Avila and conclude the bargain for the little house they had in view. He came at once and bought the house in his own name, taking up his abode in it with his wife, which made it possible for Teresa to visit them and so to make her plans. But the young couple was not rich, and could give little more than their good will. Part of the price at least must be paid down, and workmen would have to be hired at once to set the place in order.

Teresa as usual had recourse to prayer. As she prayed, St. Joseph appeared to her and bade her put the work in hand, for the money would be forthcoming when required. The workmen were accordingly engaged, plans made and the necessary alterations begun. A few days later the Saint received a present of a large sum of money from her brother Lorenzo in Peru. She was thus able to pay both the workmen and the creditors.

The house which they had bought was so small that it seemed impossible to turn it into a convent, and Teresa was greatly puzzled as to how to fit in the dormitory and recreation room, not to mention the little chapel. While she was trying to solve the difficulty Our Lord spoke to her. "Have I not already told thee to go in?" He said. "How often have I slept in the open air because I had no roof to shelter Me."

Teresa humbled herself at her Divine Master's feet and went back to the task with fresh courage; this time everything seemed simple, and she saw at once how she could manage.

The presence of the workmen made the small house rather a comfortless dwelling for Juana and her husband, but neither of them thought of complaining. One day their little son Gonsalvo, aged five, was playing among the workmen's materials when part of a wall that was being knocked down fell upon him. Crushed and senseless, the child lay under the ruins for several hours and was at last found by his father, who, thinking him dead, carried him into the house in speechless anguish and laid him on Teresa's knees.

The Saint bent her head over the inanimate little body, lowered her veil and prayed silently. Presently Gonsalvo opened his eyes, smiled, sat up and threw his little arms round his aunt's neck. "Do not be troubled," said Teresa to her sister, who was kneeling beside her, weeping bitterly. "Here is your son, take him." Both Juana and her husband believed that their child had been given back to them through Teresa's prayers.

Another strange accident showed that the evil one was doing all in his power to hinder the work. A strong wall which had just been carefully built fell suddenly during the night. "It will have to be rebuilt," said Teresa serenely when she heard the news.

"But we have not the money," objected Doña Guiomar.

"It will come," replied the Saint; and it did, that very day. Don Juan was for making the workmen rebuild the wall at their own expense, but Teresa would not hear of it. "Poor men!" she said. "It is not their fault. I know whose doing it is. What efforts Satan makes to prevent the work! But it will be carried through in spite of him." The building was indeed getting on, and the transformation of the house was nearly complete. It had been turned into the poorest little convent conceivable. Teresa's dreams seemed at last on the verge of fulfillment.

But in spite of all the care taken to preserve secrecy, suspicions had arisen as to what was going on. There was danger that these might come to the ears of the Provincial and that he would order Teresa to give up the enterprise. In that case, she would have to obey, and the work would be brought to a standstill. Our Lord, however, had His own ways of providing against this difficulty.

Although Teresa was not appreciated in her native town, rumors of her holiness had reached as far as Toledo. St. Peter of Alcantara had borne witness to her sanctity, no less than St. Francis Borgia and Father Pedro Ibañez. It began to be whispered about that there was a nun in the little town of Avila whose power of prayer was so great that God granted everything she asked of Him.

One of the greatest ladies of Toledo, Luisa, Duchess de la Cerda, had just lost her husband. It was her first great sorrow; the world which had hitherto smiled so brightly upon her seemed to be changed into a desolate wilderness. So great was her grief that her life was despaired of, when someone spoke to her of Teresa. Surely, thought the young Duchess in her anguish, a soul so beloved of God would have comfort for a sorrow such as hers. She wrote to Father Angel de Salazar, the Provincial of the Carmelites, to ask if the Saint might pay her a visit.

Teresa's surprise was great when she received an order from the Provincial to go to Toledo to be the guest of the widowed Duchess de la Cerda, who hoped for consolation from her presence. How could the Duchess have heard of her existence, she asked herself, and what would be the result if she left the work that was just about to be brought successfully to a close? She sought counsel of her Divine Master and heard in an ecstasy Our Lord speaking to her. "Go, daughter," He said; "pay no attention to those who would detain you. Fear not, I will be with you."

Father Gaspar de Salazar, hearing from Teresa of the order she had received and of Our Lord's injunctions, urged her to start at once. Confiding therefore the completion of the convent to her sister and brother-in-law, she set out for Toledo accompanied by a nun of the Convent of the Incarnation and with Don Juan de Ovalle as escort.

Chapter 7

SILENCE AND PATIENCE

“Let us somewhat resemble our King, who had no house save the stable at Bethlehem, wherein He was born, and the Cross, on which He died.”

—*St. Teresa*

TERESA found Doña Luisa de la Cerda in bed, exhausted with the violence of her grief and refusing all consolation. The Saint set to work at once to comfort her both in soul and body, and after a few days succeeded in inducing her to accept the Divine Will with love and generosity.

The young Duchess resolved to spend the rest of her life in the service of God and in good works, and she felt sure that no one could teach her to do so as well as Teresa. Her new friend must stay with her, she declared, until she was strong enough to stand alone. Her love and veneration for the Saint showed itself in ways that were often more of a cross to her guest than anything else. The humble Carmelite was treated in the palace of the Duchess as if she had been a queen; everybody bowed before her and did her honor; her slightest wish was consulted.

To Teresa, whose only desire was to live in her little convent of St. Joseph in the poverty and simplicity of Bethlehem, life in a palace with its pomp and etiquette was a kind of martyrdom. But if the adulation of the members of the great household made small impression on the Saint, her holiness had much effect on them. Everyone came to seek her advice and to ask her questions. The relations and friends of Doña Luisa wanted always to be with her, for she had help and counsel for all.

Among these was a young girl, Maria de Salazar, distinguished no less for her wit than for her beauty. It was not long before Teresa's eyes had pierced through the worldly and brilliant exterior and read in Maria's heart a long-cherished wish to give herself to God in religion. “Are these quite fit,” she said one day gently, touching the rich jewels which served to set off the young girl's beauty, “for one who desires to be the bride of Christ?” Maria, who had told no one of her secret, was greatly astonished; but Teresa, who saw in her an ardent and generous soul well-suited to help her in her plan of reform, did all she could to ground Maria in the principles of religious life.

It was while Teresa was at Toledo that she made the acquaintance of Mother Mary of Jesus, a Carmelite nun of Granada who, like herself, had long cherished the plan of founding a convent of the Primitive Rule. She had just returned from Rome, whither she had gone with the permission of her superiors to obtain a brief from the Pope authorizing her foundation. She had then heard of Teresa's undertaking and had set out at once for Toledo to see her. The two nuns talked long and earnestly of the project that was so dear to their hearts. Mother Mary was both holy and austere, but she had neither Teresa's breadth of mind nor her intelligence. Her work was not to prosper until it had been incorporated with that of the Saint.

From the Carmelite of Granada Teresa learned something unknown to her beforehand—that the Primitive Rule forbade the endowment of monasteries. She determined, therefore, to start her little foundation without revenues; but when her friends at Avila heard of this resolve, there was a general outcry; all were against it. It so happened that St. Peter of Alcantara, passing through Toledo at that moment, went to see Teresa, who told him all about her project and the remonstrances of her friends. The holy Franciscan was too great a lover of poverty to agree with them; he encouraged Teresa in her determination to found without endowment. Shortly afterward, Our Lord Himself intimated to the Saint that it was His Will that she should do so, and those who had been so much against it came round in the end to the same view.

The days were long past when the constant distractions among which she lived in Doña Luisas palace would have disturbed Teresa's recollection. She prayed at Toledo as she had prayed at Avila, and her ecstasies and visions continued. Although she sought with the greatest care to conceal these favors from those around her, she was not always successful. People surprised her sometimes while the divine light was still shining from her face and her thoughts were wholly rapt in God.

One day a servant who had long suffered from severe pains in the head and ears begged the Saint to make the Sign of the Cross on her forehead. “What are you thinking of?” cried Teresa. “Make the Sign of the Cross yourself.” But even as she

pushed the woman gently away, her hand accidentally touched the aching head, and the pain was instantly cured.

In the meantime, the Duchess was becoming more and more attached to her new friend, and it began to seem as if Teresa's stay at Toledo might be prolonged indefinitely. The Provincial made no step to recall her to Avila, and her friends were losing heart. Juana had gone home to Alba, leaving her husband as guardian of the unfinished convent, and he, uncertain what to do, suddenly resolved to go to Toledo to ask Teresa's advice. It was decided that it would be better for him to go back to his wife after having made a few necessary arrangements at Avila. But no sooner had Don Juan returned to the little convent than he was suddenly seized with fever.

It was at this moment that Teresa received permission from the Provincial to return to her convent. In spite of Doña Luisa's lamentations, the Saint set out for Avila and, passing by St. Joseph's on her way, found her brother-in-law ill and in great need of assistance. Obedience obliged her to return directly to the Incarnation, but she promised to come back as soon as she could to nurse him, and she found no difficulty in obtaining permission to do so.

Teresa realized in a moment how God had blessed her enterprise during her absence. The brief had just arrived from Rome authorizing the foundation of the little Convent of St. Joseph. It was to be a house of the Primitive Rule under the jurisdiction of the diocesan Bishop of Avila, and nobody else was to interfere with its affairs.

The Saint decided that now was the moment to found. Many of her most devoted friends happened at that moment to be in Avila. St. Peter of Alcantara was the guest of Don Francisco de Salcedo; Dr. Gaspar Daza and Father Gaspar de Salazar, rector of the Jesuit College of St. Giles, were both present in the town, together with the Bishop, Monsignor Alvaro de Mendoza.

The building was pushed on to completion, while a private meeting, presided over by St. Peter of Alcantara, was held to decide what was to be the first step in the matter. It was unanimously agreed that the Bishop's approval must be sought without delay, and the case was laid before him. But when he learned that it was proposed to found the convent without endowment, he refused his sanction. St. Peter of Alcantara was ill in bed when the bad news was brought to him. Worn out with his long life of penance, his health was failing fast, and he knew that he was near his end, but his spirit was as dauntless as ever. Rising, he announced his intention of going himself to see the Bishop; and as his legs were too weak to support him, he had himself set on a mule and so made his way to the episcopal residence. To such a petitioner Monsignor de Mendoza could refuse nothing; he agreed to take the foundation under his jurisdiction and to protect it against all attacks.

Before leaving Avila, the holy Franciscan visited the convent. "This is indeed a house of Joseph, a true cave of Bethlehem," he said, delighted with its poverty.

In the meantime, the building was progressing rapidly. On the very day it was finished Don Juan's fever left him, and he understood what God had done. "It is not necessary for me to be ill any more," he said, laughing, and took lodgings in the town, that Teresa might be more at liberty to make her arrangements. The next thing was to gather the little community. The first postulants were Antonia de Henao, a connection of the Saint's proposed by St. Peter of Alcantara; Maria de Paz, an adopted child of Doña Guiomar's; Ursula de Revilla, a penitent of Dr. Daza's; and Maria, a sister of Father Julian of Avila, a young priest who was to be the chaplain of the little convent.

On the Feast of St. Bartholomew these first foundation stones of the Reformed Carmelites arrived at St. Joseph's and were welcomed by Teresa, who at once led them to the chapel. There, in the presence of the few faithful friends who had championed the undertaking, Mass was said by Dr. Daza, the Bishop's delegate, and the Blessed Sacrament placed in the Tabernacle. The rough habits of the Reform were then blessed, the postulants were clothed, the *Te Deum* was chanted and the dream of Teresa's life was accomplished. Prostrate before the altar, the newly made novices poured out their hearts in love and gratitude to God, while the Saint, rapt in ecstasy, seemed to be already in Heaven.

Teresa had long ago determined that in order to efface all differences of rank in the nuns of the Reformed Carmel they should take symbolic names borrowed from the Saints and Angels or from the mysteries of Our Lord's life. Antonia de Henao therefore became Antonia of the Holy Ghost; Ursula de Revilla, Ursula of the Saints; Maria de Paz, Maria of the Cross; and Father Julian's sister, Maria of St. Joseph. To Teresa's great regret she could not herself assume the rough habit and coarse sandals prescribed by the Primitive Rule, for she was still personally under the jurisdiction of the Provincial. Even her permission to remain at St. Joseph's might be any day withdrawn, granted, as it had been, that she might nurse her brother-in-

law, who was now strong and well.

Father Daza and his friends had left, the ceremony was long over, but Teresa could not tear herself away from the Tabernacle. The little convent was at last founded; the Rule of Carmel was at last to be practiced in all its perfection; that which God had commanded had been done. The evil one, beaten at every point, was to make one last attempt on the chosen soul who had been appointed to carry out God's plans. Teresa was suddenly assailed with anguish as Satan suggested to her that she had made the foundation without her superior's consent. The commands of Our Lord Himself, the counsel of His Saints, the sanction of her director, the brief from Rome—all were forgotten. Doubts and fears overwhelmed her. How would these delicately nurtured young girls be able to stand the austerities of the Primitive Rule? How would the convent be provided for, founded as it was without endowment? How could she herself, weak in health, bear the new life in all its strictness? So did the tempter seek to drive her to despair; but Teresa called on her Divine Master, and the clouds at last began to break. Had she not asked Our Lord to let her suffer for His sake? What then was to be feared?

Summoning all her courage, Teresa promised before the Tabernacle that she would not rest until she had obtained permission from her superiors to live entirely at St. Joseph's. As she made the promise, the temptation left her.

Chapter 8

ST. JOSEPH'S

“A cowardly soul, afraid of anything but sin against God, is a very unseemly thing, when we have on our side the King omnipotent.”

—*St. Teresa*

THE news that the Convent of St. Joseph had been actually founded spread through Avila like wildfire. The poorer people in their simple faith hailed it with joy, but those who from the first had been against it gave full vent to their indignation and did all in their power to influence the public against it. This unendowed convent, they cried, would take the bread out of the mouths of the poor; it was a novelty, moreover, and the interests of the town demanded that it should be suppressed at once. “If the Moors had invaded Avila,” said Father Julian, “and set the whole town on fire, the disturbance could scarcely have been greater.”

When the news reached the Convent of the Incarnation, Teresa was severely blamed. She was insulting the whole Order, cried the nuns, by attempting to lead a more perfect life than its other members, and the Prioress was induced to order her instant return to the Incarnation.

It was hard to leave the young novices alone, but Teresa's first thought was obedience. Having blessed and embraced her little family, she commended it to Our Lord and St. Joseph, placed Ursula of the Saints in charge of the small household, and departed. No sooner had she arrived at the Incarnation than she was summoned before the Prioress and the elder members of the community to explain her conduct. She gently answered all the questions put to her, excused herself in no way for what she had done, and asked pardon if she had been in any way to blame.

It was then decided that she should be questioned by the Provincial, and Father Angel de Salazar was hastily summoned. Before the assembled nuns he rebuked Teresa sharply for her action, but not a word in her own defense passed her lips. Standing before them all like a culprit, she humbly listened to what Father de Salazar had to say, begging only that she might be punished and then forgiven.

The Provincial, touched by Teresa's humility, counseled indulgence, but of this the nuns would not hear. Her doings were a source of scandal to the town, they declared; she was the most imperfect among them all and had only founded the monastery that people might think well of her. To these accusations Teresa only replied that it was perfectly true, that she was the greatest sinner in the convent.

Father de Salazar was thoroughly perplexed; turning at last to Teresa, he bade her declare before the assembled company the reasons that had moved her to act as she had done. The simple eloquence of her reply impressed him so much that, dismissing the nuns, he ordered her to speak to him fully of all that had passed between her Divine Master and herself, the counsel she had taken and the means she had employed.

Father de Salazar was an upright man and a good religious. As he listened to Teresa's humble recital and realized how careful she had been not to act in any way against obedience, he was now as much in her favor as he had been against her. Dismissing her at last with his blessing, he promised to allow her to return to St. Joseph's as soon as the turmoil had subsided.

There was no sign of this, however. A meeting was held in the town hall by the people of Avila at which it was decided that the new convent should be suppressed and the novices sent back to their homes. When told of this decision the little community flatly refused to obey; they appealed to their God and to the King. They were under the jurisdiction of the Bishop alone, they said, and he alone could dismiss them.

The Governor, undaunted, held another meeting, at which it was declared that the convent had been founded without the consent of the town and was on this account illegal. The Blessed Sacrament must therefore be removed, the nuns expelled and the house pulled down. The order was about to be given when a learned Dominican, Father Bañez, rose to his feet and addressed the people. Teresa de Ahumada, he explained, was unknown to him except by name; he had never even seen her; he was therefore wholly unbiased in the matter.

“But it is a marvel to me,” he continued, “that the townspeople of Avila can believe that a few poor women hidden in their cells should constitute a danger to the public or be a burden on the town. What is the reason for this meeting? Is there an enemy at our gates? Is the town on fire? Are plague and famine among us? No. Four humble Carmelites are praying in an obscure quarter of the city. Moreover, the Bishop alone has power to deal with the question, for the Holy See has placed the convent under his jurisdiction. Let those who think the foundation illegal make their complaints to him.”

Father Bañez was a man of weight in Avila; his opinion was respected, and for the moment the danger was averted. The Governor was obliged to give way, and the meeting was dispersed; but the Saint’s enemies were determined not to be beaten. They did all in their power to induce the Provincial and the Prioress of the Incarnation to compel Teresa to submit to their will, and the storm raged on without abating.

The Saint’s friends were not idle either. Father Julian of Avila, who had constituted himself Teresa’s devoted squire and chaplain, went backward and forward between St. Joseph’s and the Convent of the Incarnation bringing Teresa news of her daughters and returning with words of comfort and consolation to the orphaned community. Father Gaspar Daza was also watching over the new foundation, zealously training the novices in the ways of the spiritual life, while Don Francisco de Salcedo provided for their temporal necessities.

The authorities of Avila finally decided to lay the case before the King’s Council. Many of Teresa’s friends interested themselves in her cause, and the lawsuit ended in a complete triumph for the Reform, the Council blaming the Governor severely for his action in the matter. It only remained for Teresa to obtain permission to return to St. Joseph’s, but this the Provincial hesitated to grant. Father Pedro Ibañez, who had befriended the Saint at the beginning of her enterprise and who was back for a short time in Avila, did all in his power on her behalf. Even the Bishop, Don Alvaro de Mendoza, wrote to Father Angel de Salazar, but with no effect. Teresa at last took the matter into her own hands. “Beware, my Father, of resisting the Holy Ghost,” she said one day solemnly to the Provincial. At her words his hesitation vanished. He not only gave her permission herself to return to St. Joseph’s, but even allowed her to take with her some nuns from the Incarnation who wished to join the Reform.

Who shall describe the joy at the little convent as Teresa crossed the threshold! Her first visit was to the chapel to thank God for all His mercies and to offer herself and her little flock to Him forever. There at the foot of the Tabernacle she saw in a vision her Lord, who, stooping lovingly toward her, placed a crown on her head and blessed her for what she had done in His service. Then the Saint, together with her companions from the Incarnation, put on the coarse habit and the rough sandals of the Reform. Doña Teresa de Ahumada was now Teresa of Jesus.

And what of the little convent that she had founded? Father Julian of Avila, who wrote the history of the foundation forty-two years later, says:

“God willed to have a house in which He could recreate Himself; a house in which He could take up His abode; a garden in which flowers should grow not of the kind which bloom on earth, but those which bloom only in Heaven.”

It was truly the little sanctuary of which Teresa had dreamed, a place of prayer and penance for the salvation of souls where God was served in perfect fidelity.

The thought of the end for which the convent had been founded was ever present to the Saint. “Let us help by our prayers,” she would say to her novices, “the apostolic men who are working in the world to save sinners, for they are the servants of our King. If we contribute to their success by our prayers we shall also have fought, we in our solitude, for God’s cause.”

Mortification, obedience and humility were the virtues Teresa required of her daughters, together with a holy joy and freedom of heart in God’s service. The different duties of the little household were divided among its members, Teresa taking her turn in the kitchen with the others and working harder than them all. It was remarked that when it was her turn to cook, everything that she needed seemed to come as if by magic. It was as if Our Lord, knowing how she delighted in making a little feast for her daughters, took care to provide the means.

On other days, when the fare was scanty, she would so speak to them of the love of God that their hearts were all on fire and every privation was forgotten. When the nuns were not at prayer or chanting the Divine Office, they spent their time in spinning or mending; every moment was turned to account, for idleness, as Teresa well knew, opens a door to many evils. The recreations, presided over by the Saint, were full of gaiety and holy joy. Teresa could not bear melancholy. “A sad nun is a bad

nun,” she would often say, and a depressing or depressed postulant had small chance of admittance at St. Joseph’s.

No one knew better than she the weakness of human nature and the dangers of giving way to fussiness about health. She had learned by her own experience that God blesses courage in this respect, and she advised her daughters to practice it. When they were really ill, she bade them say so simply; but as for trifling ailments, it was best to think as little about them as possible. “I beg of you, my children, to bear your little ills in silence,” she would say to her novices; “they are sometimes only the effect of the imagination. The more we give in the worse we get.” In the time of real suffering they were to lift up their thoughts to Heaven. “How sweet it will be for us at the hour of death,” she cries, “to go to be judged by Him whom we have loved above all things!. . . What happiness to think we are not going to a strange country, but to our own, since it is the home of that beloved Spouse whom we love so much, and by whom we are so much loved!”

The Bishop of Avila, Don Alvaro de Mendoza, visited the convent frequently and was delighted with the fervor of the nuns. One day he brought with him a beautiful crucifix, which Teresa begged leave to show to the community. She had returned to the parlor and was talking to the Bishop when the sound of voices singing led her to open the door leading into the cloister. A little procession had been formed by the novices, at the head of which marched the youngest postulant holding the crucifix aloft and singing the litany of the Holy Name. Instead, however, of “Have mercy on us,” they were chanting fervently, “Stay with us.” The application was obvious, and Teresa was a little ashamed of her daughters, but the Bishop only laughed. Needless to say, the crucifix remained at St. Joseph’s.

In the autumn of 1566 a holy missionary, Father Maldonado, came to see Teresa. He had just returned from the West Indies and had sad tales to tell of the ignorance and vice of the natives. For some days after his departure the Saint could do nothing but pray to God to help these poor souls, that they might not be lost eternally. As she knelt weeping before the Tabernacle Our Lord appeared and said to her, “Wait a little while, My daughter, and great things shall be revealed to you.”

Six months later the Saint heard that Father John Baptist Rubeo, General of the Order of Mount Carmel, was on his way to Spain to visit the houses of his order. She was not without fear that the General might disapprove of her reform and use his authority to order her to return to the Incarnation; so, bidding her daughters pray, she sent him a humble invitation to visit St. Joseph’s.

Now the General, who was a wise and holy man, had come to Spain at the request of the King with the intention of introducing certain reforms among the Spanish Carmelites. At St. Joseph’s he found all he had dreamed of and more—the very spirit of Carmel in all its ancient integrity. It was the desire of his heart, he said to Teresa, that such a seed should take root and spread; it was the very realization of all his hopes. Among the houses of the Mitigated Rule he found little zeal for reform and he returned frequently during the time of his stay in Spain to talk over difficulties and discuss plans with the Saint. His wish was that she should found other convents of the Primitive Rule, holding their authority straight from the Generals of the Order, and this he gave her leave to do in any places in the province of Castile where the Ordinary of the diocese would give permission.

Don Alvaro de Mendoza, the Bishop, was very anxious to found houses of the Primitive Rule for men also, but here the General hesitated. The time, he said, was not quite ripe for such an undertaking; it would come later. He had already set out on his return journey to Rome when he received a message from Teresa earnestly begging that he would grant the Bishop’s request. To her he could refuse nothing. Permission was therefore given to found two monasteries of the Primitive Rule for men, on the condition that the Provincial give his consent.

Chapter 9

FOUNDATIONS

“For my part, I think that the measure of being able to bear much or little is that of love.”

—*St. Teresa*

THE time had come when Teresa was to leave the sweet solitude of St. Joseph's, the life of prayer and silence that she loved so much. The work of the foundations lay before her with its long journeys, its weary correspondence, its complicated business affairs, its trials and its troubles. There is a belief abroad in the world that a life of prayer and contemplation tends to make people vague and impractical: the last ten years of St. Teresa's life are a standing proof to the contrary. Hers was a wisdom, an insight and a power wholly unknown to those who live only in the world of matter; in everything she undertook she succeeded.

About twenty miles distant from Avila lay the little town of Medina del Campo, chosen by Teresa for many reasons as the site of her second foundation. The Jesuits were already established there, and their rector, Father Baltasar Alvarez, Teresa's old friend, had promised to support the undertaking. The Prior of the Carmelites of the Mitigated Rule, Father Antonio de Heredia, was also strongly in their favor and had promised to find them a house. The one that he bought, however, was in such ill repair that it was impossible to go into it; Father Julian of Avila was therefore sent to Medina to rent a lodging in which the nuns could live until it was ready.

In the middle of August Teresa set out, accompanied by her niece Maria de Ocampo, now Sister Maria Bautista, and Sister Anne of the Angels, both from the Convent of St. Joseph's, and four nuns of the Incarnation who wished to join the Reform. They were halfway on their journey and close to the little town of Arévalo, where they were to spend the night, when they were met by a messenger from Father Julian. The proprietor of the little house he had rented, which was close to the Augustinian Convent in Medina, declared that the Augustinians objected to the Carmelites as neighbors and that he could not hold to his bargain.

Here was indeed a calamity. What was to be done? To return to Avila, they all decided, was out of the question. While her daughters slept, Teresa prayed, and in the morning came the solution. Father Antonio de Heredia, who, eager to welcome the Saint, had come to Arévalo to escort her on her way, suggested that they should go directly to the house which he had bought. It was out of repair, it is true, but not too far gone to afford them shelter. They could call on the way at his own monastery of St. Anne's for all they required for the chapel; Mass could then be said and the convent founded at once.

The plan sounded possible, so the little company set out for Medina. It was near midnight when they reached St. Anne's, stopped to gather the furniture for the chapel and, reinforced by two of Father Antonio's friars, set off again on foot through the town, looking, as Father Julian merrily remarked, exactly like a caravan of gypsies who had robbed a church. Luckily, they met few people and proceeded unnoticed until they reached a tumbled-down old house facing the street. This was their future convent. Father Antonio must have been suffering from temporary blindness, thought St. Teresa, when he had judged it fit for habitation. Nevertheless, there they were, and the chapel had to be gotten ready.

Father Antonio and the two friars set to work with a will. The rubbish was cleared out, the place swept, hangings fixed; everybody did their best, and by daybreak all was ready. A tiny bell rang for the first Mass, and the people, greatly astonished to find that a new convent had been founded during the night, came flocking into the little chapel. The nuns assisted from behind the staircase door, for there was no grille and the place was crowded. Teresa's soul was flooded with joy at the thought that her Divine Master had another sanctuary on earth, and all trials were forgotten.

But when the Mass was over and their new abode appeared in the searching light of day, the Saint saw what the darkness of the night had mercifully hidden. The chapel was on the street, and seeing the state of dilapidation of the whole building, anyone might have gotten in; the house seemed to be tottering to its ruin. But the sight of the poverty of the new foundation only served to increase the devotion of the people, who continued to flock to the little chapel to pray. Teresa set men to watch by

night, for fear of thieves, and she herself watched, lest the men should sleep. A week later a rich merchant of Medina kindly offered the upper floor of his house to the nuns while the necessary repairs were carried out.

Father Antonio de Heredia, the Prior of St. Anne's, continued to befriend the convent, and when Teresa mentioned her intention of founding a house of the Primitive Rule for men, immediately offered himself as her first subject. A few days later the Saint received a visit from a holy old friar who had also heard of the project. He came to recommend to her notice a young religious who, not content with the Mitigated Rule, had resolved to join the Carthusians. The next day, Father John of St. Matthias, as the young friar was called, made his appearance in person. Teresa was delighted with him; his modesty, wisdom and piety, added to his diminutive stature, gave him something of the air of an angelic child. "I had a friar and a half," Teresa would say, laughing, when she told the story in later years, "wherewith to start the Reform." But the "half-friar," known to history as St. John of the Cross, was to be the very prop and stay of the whole undertaking. The Saint bade him continue his theological studies for a year until the time should be ripe for the foundation.

In the meantime, Don Bernardino de Mendoza, younger brother of the Bishop of Avila, had offered Teresa a house and garden if she would found a convent at Valladolid. Scarcely had she accepted his offer when her old friend Doña Luisa de la Cerda came to Medina to beg the Saint to make a foundation on her property at Malagon. This Teresa did not see her way to doing, so she declined. She then set out for Alcala, whither she had been entreated to go by a lady of the Court of Philip II who had helped Mother Mary of Jesus to found there her new Convent of the Reform. The foundation was not prospering owing to the excessive austerities of the foundress, who wrote herself begging Teresa to come and teach her the true spirit of the Order.

Such a humble plea could not be refused. The Master's interests were at stake; the Saint set out at once. Mother Mary received Teresa as an angel sent from Heaven, gave her full authority and begged her to explain how she had succeeded so wonderfully in producing the perfect life they had dreamed of together when she herself had failed.

Teresa's teaching was eagerly listened to; the austerities were diminished; the spirit of love and joy entered into the hearts of the community, and when their visitor left them two months later, all were happy and contented.

Doña Luisa was still begging for her foundation at Malagon, and induced thereto by Father Bañez' advice, Teresa decided to grant her wish. Having set all in order at Medina, she went to Toledo, taking with her four nuns from Avila. Here they were joined by an old friend, Maria de Salazar, who was the first religious to be professed at the new convent. Having remained two months at Malagon to put all in order, Teresa resolved to go to Valladolid.

But Valladolid was sixty miles away, and, worn out with hard work and travelling, the Saint fell sick at Toledo, where she was obliged to remain for rest and treatment. She was scarcely well when she set forth again, only to be attacked once more at Avila by an illness which obliged her to stay at St. Joseph's for another month, to the great delight of her daughters. While she was there, a Spanish gentleman, having heard that she proposed to found a monastery of barefooted or "Discalced" Carmelite friars, offered her a tiny house at Durvelo, a little village near Medina. Teresa gratefully accepted the gift and visited her new property on the way to Valladolid. It was indeed very small, and exceedingly dirty; Father Julian declared that nothing could ever make it fit for a monastery, but Teresa thought otherwise and described it to Father John and Father Antonio when they came to see her at Medina. They were ready, they declared, for the love of God, to take up their abode in a stable: the sooner the better.

But Father Antonio had first to resign his office of Prior and put things in order at St. Anne's, and it was decided that while he did so, Father John of the Cross should go to Valladolid with Teresa to be instructed in the Rule of the Reform. The foundation in that town was successfully carried through, but for Durvelo the consent of the Provincial was necessary, and Teresa had not much to hope for from Father Angel de Salazar. Consent was, however, obtained by means of an influential friend, and Father John of the Cross, armed with Teresa's blessing and the coarse habit that she had made for him with her own hands, set out accompanied by a carpenter, who was to make the necessary alterations in the tiny building.

Father Antonio arrived soon after with a brother from St. Anne's, and when Teresa visited them three months later, she found the foundation in full swing. The cells, it is true, were so narrow that no one could turn around in them; the beds were of straw, with a stone for a pillow; the whole furniture consisted of a skull as a reminder of death and two sticks in the form of a cross; but the fervor of the three Fathers made up for everything.

The Primitive Rule was now planted in the heart of the Order of Carmel. There were troubles and sorrows ahead, but the

grain of mustard seed had been sown; it was growing rapidly, and in time to come its branches were to reach to the ends of the earth.

Chapter 10

PRIORESS OF THE INCARNATION

“The love and fear of God are like two strong castles, from which war is made against the world and the devil.”

—*St. Teresa*

FOUNDATIONS followed each other rapidly at Toledo, Salamanca, Alba and Pastraña, in which last-named place Teresa, to her great joy, was also able to establish a second monastery of friars. She was looking forward to a time of well-earned repose with her daughters at Salamanca when the Provincial of the Mitigated Rule began to interfere with her convent at Medina. It was not the first time that this had happened, and Teresa wrote him a firm but respectful letter reminding him that all the foundations of the Reform were under the jurisdiction of the General of the Order alone. The reply of the Provincial was to cancel the election of the Prioress who had just been appointed at Medina and to put a nun of the Mitigated Rule from the Convent of the Incarnation in her place.

Teresa, who had hastened to the assistance of her daughters, was ordered, together with the deposed Prioress, to return at once to Avila under pain of severe censure. Although the convents of the Reform were not under the Provincial's jurisdiction, Teresa considered that she herself was, for she had entered and made her profession in a house of the Mitigated Rule. She therefore obeyed, although her heart was heavy at the thought of leaving her daughters at Medina in the hands of an entirely incapable superior.

It was at this very moment that, a second visitation of the Order having been arranged by Pope Pius V and Philip II, two holy and learned Dominicans were dispatched to Spain on this mission. The first stop of Father Hernandez, who had been appointed Visitor of Castile, was at the Monastery of the Barefooted Friars at Pastraña. Delighted with the fervor and austerity which he found there, he next visited the convent of nuns, the holiness of whose lives gave him an ardent desire to know the Saint who had planned and executed the Reform. Teresa was at Avila, they told him, and thither he went to see her. While there, having heard of the doings at Medina and that the intruded Prioress was heartily sick of her position, Father Hernandez determined to remedy the evil. Going straight to Medina he presided, by virtue of the authority given him by the Holy See, at a new election, at which, upon his suggestion, Teresa herself was chosen Prioress.

It took the Saint two months to repair the mischief that had been done, but peace and order were soon restored and sorrow gave way to joy. For Teresa herself, another and a heavier cross was in store, an unexpected and overwhelming sorrow. She received a letter from Father Hernandez bidding her return at once to Avila. In virtue of the authority given him over the whole Order, he had appointed her Prioress of the Convent of the Incarnation.

The task of the Visitor was certainly not an easy one. His mission was to introduce certain reforms among the Carmelites of the Mitigated Rule; to make them practice at least what their Rule enjoined. The effect produced on Father Hernandez, fresh from the convents of the Primitive Rule, by the sight of the disorder and relaxation which reigned at the Convent of the Incarnation can well be imagined. Things had not improved since Teresa's departure, and there was much need of reform in every way. How could such a state of things be remedied? Who could be found strong enough, patient and gentle enough, to introduce the necessary reforms and make these poor souls practice even the Mitigated Rule with fidelity? One person and one only seemed to him to fulfill the required conditions, and that one was Teresa.

If the appointment was a blow to Teresa, it was no less of a shock to the nuns of the Incarnation, and they resolved to resist it with all their power. Teresa would try to enforce upon them the austerities of the Primitive Rule, they protested angrily to one another. They did not want to be reformed; they were quite contented as they were. They would die, they declared, before they accepted her as Prioress.

To Teresa the burden seemed almost greater than she could bear. How could she leave her newly founded convents? Would not such a charge absorb all her time and all her strength? How could she make these nuns, already strongly prejudiced against her, practice their Rule and give up the customs to which they held so strongly? At Our Lord's feet she poured out all

her misgivings and all her sorrow, and there, as always, she found the help she needed. "Take courage," said her Divine Master, "and know that it is My wish. It will not be so difficult as you think, and your foundations will not suffer. Cease to resist, for My power is great."

Early in October Teresa set out for the Convent of the Incarnation accompanied by the Provincial, Father Angel de Salasar, and another ecclesiastic. Standing in the presence of the community and the Provincial, she could not but remember another occasion when she had stood, not as now in the place of honor, but as a culprit before her judges. And yet she had suffered less then than she was suffering now.

When the act of election which made Teresa Prioress was read, the storm broke loose. Shouts and cries of indignation drowned the voice of the Provincial. A few of the nuns, who were in Teresa's favor, tried to intone the *Te Deum* and to force their way through the crowd to conduct her to the choir, but the attempt was hopeless. The Provincial threatened the rebellious party with the censures of the Church; nobody listened, and the uproar continued. Through the raging crowd Teresa at last succeeded in escaping to the chapel, where she prayed earnestly for help from Heaven. Then, returning to the chapter-room, where Father Angel was still struggling to enforce silence and submission, she went about to each nun in turn, speaking gently to each and saying aloud before them all that it was not astonishing that they should accept ungraciously a Prioress who was so unworthy of the office.

Though Teresa was at last installed, the nuns were not vanquished. When the first chapter was held, they agreed that they would declare openly that they would never recognize her as Prioress. But while they were planning, Teresa was planning too. When the nuns entered the chapter-room, the Prioress's stall was occupied by a large statue of Our Lady; the keys of office were in her hand, and Teresa sat on a low stool at her feet. The application was easy to see: Our Lady was Prioress of the Incarnation, the Saint was to be her humble servant; the hearts of the nuns were softened a little, and still more so when Teresa spoke.

"If the sacrifice of my life or of my blood would help you," said their new Prioress, "I would make it. Why should you look upon me as a stranger? I am a daughter of this house and your Reverences' sister. You need not fear my rule. Though I have lived among the Carmelites of the Primitive Rule, I know, by the grace of God, how to govern those who are not of the Reform. My wish is that we should serve God in meekness, doing the small amount our Rule demands out of love for Him who loves us so much. Our Lord is merciful, and though our weakness is great, He will help us."

The nuns' hearts were touched, and they promised obedience to Teresa, begging her to reform whatever was opposed to the practice of their Rule. The first thing to be done was to make them happy in their religious life, and to this Teresa brought all her genius, her tact and her knowledge of human nature. She succeeded beyond all expectation. Gradually the visits in the parlor were diminished; Divine Office was regularly sung; cheerful recreations, spiritual reading, prayer and work took the place of the old idleness and distractions. Discontent and weariness gave way to joy and fervor.

This was not all done in a day, but by degrees, the nuns learning ever more and more to appreciate and love the Mother that God had sent them. She could read every heart and had help and sympathy for every difficulty. Full of courage herself, she had the gift of giving courage to others. When, through her influence, Father John of the Cross had been appointed confessor to the convent, Teresa could truly say that her daughters of the Incarnation bade fair to rival their sisters of the Reform in their zeal and fervor in God's service. The work that had been done, and the earnest efforts that had been made, were shortly to receive the seal of God's approval.

The nuns were all assembled on the feast day of St. Sebastian in the oratory where the first chapter had been held. They had just begun to sing the *Salve Regina* when Teresa, looking upward, saw suddenly that the statue of the Mother of God which had remained in the Prioress's stall had vanished. In place of it there stood our Blessed Lady herself, surrounded by Angels who hovered in a circle above the stalls of the community. The vision lasted until the antiphon was ended, when the nuns, struck by the sight of Teresa's radiant face, asked her eagerly what had happened and heard from her own lips the account of what she had seen.

To this day the Prioress' stall in the Convent of the Incarnation remains vacant in Our Lady's honor. The nuns sit on the footstools below their stalls, which remain also empty and are decorated with flowers in remembrance of the vision.

Chapter 11

THE LAST TRIAL

“Though trials or persecutions increase, yet if we bear them without offending Our Lord, rejoicing in suffering for His sake, it will be all the greater gain.”

—*St. Teresa*

TERESA had been at the Convent of the Incarnation about two years when Father Hernandez gave her leave to visit some of the houses of the Reform where her presence was urgently needed. The foundation at Pastraña especially was in a very difficult situation, for its foundress, the Princess of Eboli, having suddenly lost her husband, had announced her intention of entering the convent as a nun.

The Prioress was aghast, and not without reason, for she had had some experience of the noble lady's whims and caprices. The news that the Princess had had herself clothed with the habit in her own palace and was on her way to the convent filled all hearts with a consternation which her actions only served to augment.

Her request that two of her ladies-in-waiting should be instantly admitted as novices having been refused, she sent for a Prior of the Mitigated Rule to enforce her commands. When the Prioress objected that it was altogether against the rules that she should receive in the cloisters the people who came to condole with her on her husband's death, the self-made novice replied that the convent belonged to her and she would do what she chose in it. After three weeks of religious life she departed as suddenly as she had come, dimly conscious of the fact that she had made a fool of herself and furiously indignant with everybody and everything. To satisfy her ill humor, she withdrew all that she herself as well as her husband had given to the convent, leaving the nuns in the most abject poverty.

Teresa was busy with a foundation at Segovia, but as soon as she was free she set out for Pastraña, determined to withdraw the nuns from their impossible position and to give up the house altogether. But the Princess, although she would do nothing more for the foundation, was determined that it should remain, and the community had to escape from the convent in the darkness of the night. They made their way with some difficulty to Segovia, where the Prioress was placed in charge of the new foundation.

Teresa's term of office at the Incarnation had now expired, and she had great difficulty in preventing the nuns from re-electing her. “I love the house as my mother, and you all as my sisters,” she said to them, “but I cannot remain with you. My other houses need me too much.” She was then begged to choose her successor, and having named the sub-Prioress, who was immediately elected, the Saint gave herself up once more to the work of the foundations.

She was now over sixty years of age, worn out with hard work and ill health, but her spirit was as valiant as ever. “To suffer or to die” had been her constant prayer, and her longing to share in the Passion of her Divine Lord was to be satisfied more fully than ever during the last years of her life.

The Carmelite friars were not, as were their sisters of the Reform, under the direct jurisdiction of the General of the Order, but were governed by the Provincials of the Mitigated Rule. That sooner or later there would be trouble on account of this arrangement had always been foreseen by St. Teresa, but for the moment it was impossible to remedy it. The Dominican Visitors, Father Hernandez and Father Vargas, had been so delighted with the fervor and zeal of the friars of the Reform that they had established them in several new foundations, Father Vargas going so far even as to delegate to Father Jerome Gratian, one of the most gifted among them, his own powers as Visitor of the Order.

The Carmelites of the Mitigated Rule were already jealous of the growth and prosperity of the Reform; no sooner did they hear of this new mark of favor than, filled with indignation, they denounced Father Vargas' action to their General in Rome. This new growth, they complained, was troubling the peace of the Order; there would soon be a schism in its midst. Every kind of charge was brought against the friars of the Primitive Rule. They were rebellious, disobedient; they founded new monasteries without permission; they wanted to enforce their reforms on the whole Order.

Father Rubeo believed these reports. He passed severe censures on the Barefooted friars and sent Father Tostado, a

Portuguese Carmelite, to Spain to act as his representative, giving him authority to settle all the affairs of the Order. A long and weary struggle ensued. The Papal Nuncio and the King upheld the friars of the Reform, while the far more powerful body of the Mitigated Rule, with Father Tostado at their head, was determined to drive them out of their houses. Teresa prayed and suffered. The work of long years seemed in danger of being overthrown, but her trust was in God, by whose inspiration she had acted.

In the meantime, new foundations for nuns were made at Veas and Seville. The Saint started for the latter town, accompanied by a few of her daughters, in the midst of the heat of a Castilian summer. They travelled in a covered cart, and Teresa was attacked by fever on the way. The only shelter they could get was an attic directly under the roof of a poor little inn. It had no windows, and the pitiless sun beat in through the door whenever it was opened; it was easier to continue the journey than to seek rest in such a place. While they were crossing the Guadalquivir the ferryboat got adrift and they were nearly drowned.

The party was resting in a field near Alvino when a violent quarrel broke out between some peasants and soldiers who were passing. Knives and swords were drawn, things looked dangerous and the nuns were very much alarmed. But Teresa, going straight into the midst of the combatants, bade them remember that they were under the eyes of God, who would one day judge them. There was something in the face and voice of the Saint that strangely calmed their passion. Swords and knives were sheathed, anger was forgotten and they went their way in peace.

At last Teresa and her daughters reached their journey's end. The convent at Seville was founded, but fresh sorrow was in store.

At the time of the foundation of Pastraña, the Princess of Eboli, having heard that the Saint, in obedience to an order of her confessor, had written an account of her life, requested that it should be given her to read. Teresa had refused, whereupon the Princess, highly indignant, represented that the privilege had been granted to the Duchess of Alba and Doña Luisa de la Cerda. Why, therefore, should she, equally a patroness of the Order, be excluded? The Saint had been obliged to yield reluctantly, but her fears were justified, for the Princess, utterly incapable of understanding what she read, had loaned the book to her friends, and Teresa was unable to recover it. Later came the death of the Prince and the unpleasant episode at Pastraña which made the Princess Teresa's inveterate enemy. Here was a chance for revenge. The great lady denounced the book to the Inquisition as unorthodox.

In spite of the fact that it had been approved by eminent theologians, Teresa herself in her humility believed that what she had written must be full of faults. She was in the greatest distress, for she feared that if the book were condemned, the scandal would fall upon the whole Order. Her apprehensions, however, were soon set at rest. The book was not only approved by the Holy Office, but commended; the spite of the Princess had done the Saint more good than harm.

In the meantime, the affairs of the Barefooted friars were going from bad to worse. Teresa herself, as their foundress, was included in the calumnies which were daily being circulated against them. A decree of the General Chapter condemned her, in punishment for her disobedience, to confine herself to one of her convents and to remain there permanently. The Saint replied in a spirit of filial obedience, but with the deepest sorrow. Her only comfort, she wrote to Father Rubeo, in the trials she had had to bear was the consideration that she had believed herself to be carrying out his orders and doing God's will.

The nuns of Seville, before Teresa left them—forever, as they thought—obtained permission for Brother John de la Miseria, a friar of the Reform, to paint her portrait. Brother John was an unskillful artist and better at prayer than at painting; but after an incalculable number of sittings he declared that the picture was finished. "God forgive you, Brother John, for making me so ugly!" cried Teresa merrily when she saw it, "after all you have made me suffer."

In the autumn of 1576 the Saint arrived at Toledo accompanied by a young and holy lay sister, Anne of St. Bartholomew, who was henceforth to be her inseparable companion.

Father Tostado, determined to uphold the honor of the Mitigated Rule, had in the meantime called together a Provincial Chapter where it was decreed that the friars of the Reform were to be shod, to wear the usual habit and to be under the direction of the superiors of the Mitigated Rule. They were to open their houses to all who should be sent to them and go themselves, if required, to live in any house of the Order.

The decree meant the complete annihilation of the Reform. The Barefooted friars resolved to resist it to the utmost, and

the friars of the Mitigated Rule resorted to violence. Father John of the Cross was imprisoned and so harshly treated that his life was in danger. Misrepresentations were sent to Rome with the result that another decree was issued, making the nuns as well as the friars of the Reform subject to the government of the superiors of the Mitigated Rule and forbidding them to receive novices. It was ruin, total and complete. When the news reached Teresa at St. Joseph's, for once her strong spirit failed her. All day long she remained alone praying and weeping in the bitterness of her heart.

It was the Eve of the Nativity, and as the night wore on, Sister Anne of St. Bartholomew knocked softly at the Saint's door and begged her to take some nourishment before she went to the choir for Matins. Having succeeded in inducing her to come to the refectory, the sister placed food before her and retired to a little distance; but still Teresa sat motionless, absorbed in her grief. Then in a vision Sister Anne beheld Our Lord standing before the Saint and looking at her with eyes full of tender compassion. Taking the bread which lay on the table, He blessed it and gave it to her, bidding her eat for love of Him. Courage and hope returned to Teresa's heart; the Master had not forsaken the work that He had inspired. Next day she sent word to all the houses of the Reform to redouble their prayers and penances, writing at the same time to the King to implore his help.

The authorities, deceived for a time, were beginning to see where the truth lay. The calumnies of the friars of the Mitigated Rule were proved false. After long and weary waiting a brief was published withdrawing all the houses of the Reform from the government of the Mitigated Order. Shortly afterward Pope Gregory XIII decreed that the friars and nuns of the Primitive Rule should be united in a separate Province governed by a Provincial of their own choosing. Teresa was set at liberty; the Reform was saved.

Chapter 12

THE END OF SORROW

“Our Lord said to me one day: ‘Thinkest thou, My daughter, that meriting lies in fruition? No, merit lies only in doing, in suffering and in loving.’”

—*St. Teresa*

AT the end of June, 1578 St. Teresa, in obedience to the order of the Provincial, set out on a last visitation of her convents. At Malagon she was laid up with an attack of paralysis, but as soon as she was able to move, continued her journey. At Toledo she fell ill again, but refused to rest. “I am so used to suffering,” she said, smiling, “that I can bear it and still go on.” After a week of weary travelling in a rough cart over mountainous country she reached Segovia; it was mid-August before she came to Valladolid, where she was again so ill that her life was despaired of.

But new foundations were being asked for in several places, and as long as the Saint had life and breath she must be about her Master’s business. At Burgos there were trials without number. The Archbishop, after having given his consent to a foundation, suddenly drew back and opposed the project. Teresa was begged to come herself and try what she could do. She was in a burning fever, but would not on that account delay. “Go, My daughter, and fear nothing,” her Divine Master said in answer to her prayer for guidance. “I am with thee.”

It was bitter wintry weather when the little party, consisting of the Saint, her faithful Sister Anne of St. Bartholomew, her niece Teresita and Father Jerome Gratian started on their journey. The floods were out, and the whole country under water. The nuns had to get out of the cart and walk, or rather wade, through the icy stream, for the road had altogether disappeared. It was Teresa, under the burden of her sickness and her seventy years, who encouraged them and kept up their hearts; but presently her foot slipped, and she was nearly carried away by the torrent. “Ah, Lord!” she cried with loving familiarity, “why do You put such difficulties in our way?”

“Do not complain, My daughter,” was the answer; “it is thus I treat My friends.”

“Ah, my Lord,” lamented the Saint, “that is why You have so few.”

Presently they were able to get into the carts again, but these stuck in the mud, which made another long delay. At last in a torrential downpour of rain they reached Burgos, where a noble lady, Doña Catarina de Tolosa, had offered them hospitality. As may be imagined, the journey had not improved Teresa’s condition. The Archbishop, approached once more on the subject of the foundation, declared that he would give his consent on condition that the nuns had a good house and means of subsistence; but a house could not be found.

In the meantime, the Carmelites had to go out to church. One day as they were walking along beside a dirty stream, Teresa gently asked a woman who was standing in the middle of the footpath to let them pass. For sole answer the woman called her a hypocrite and pushed her into the gutter. The nuns were very angry, but the Saint bade them take no notice. “The good woman has spoken truly and acted justly,” she said; “that is only what I deserve.” Another day, when she was kneeling in the church, some men who were passing in a hurry gave her such a push that they knocked her down. Teresa only laughed at her ill luck and made excuses for them.

At last a kind doctor of Burgos, who had been called in by Father Jerome Gratian to prescribe for the Saint, spoke of her to his friend Ferdinand de Malauga, who offered to lodge the little community in an attic near the chapel of the large hospital of which he was governor. This proposal, with its promise of privacy, Teresa gratefully accepted, to the regret of Doña Catarina, who would have retained her holy guests. The dwelling was poor, but it looked on to the chapel, and there were the sick in the hospital to visit and console. The patients could not have enough of the Saint. “When Mother Teresa is here,” they would say, “all our pains get better; the very sight of her does us good.”

Dr. Aguiar was still searching everywhere for a house. The only one for sale was described as most unsuitable in every way, but as soon as Teresa saw it, she was delighted. The purchase was therefore concluded, the Archbishop seeming to approve; but as soon as the nuns had taken possession, he expressed his displeasure, and it was only after many anxious

moments that his full consent was obtained. A month later the River Orlanzon, swelled by violent rains, overflowed its banks and flooded the whole district. Trees were uprooted, houses disappeared; a sea of water surrounded the convent. Teresa, who had refused to join the crowds of people who had taken refuge on higher ground, remained to pray with her daughters. The cold was intense, for the water had invaded the lower part of the house and every gust of wind threatened destruction. The nuns were half starving, for what food there was was under water. At last, when all seemed hopeless, the floods began to abate, and the people of Burgos, in great anxiety as to the fate of the Carmelites, came to the rescue. The doors of the house were broken open so that the water might escape, and the rubbish was cleared out.

At the end of August Teresa went to Valladolid, where she had intended to take a much needed rest, but here a new heartbreak awaited her. As Sister Anne afterward said, "God willed that she should have nothing but suffering all along the road." Maria Bautista, her niece and the Prioress of the convent, displeased with the Saint's decision with regard to a difficult family affair, received her with marked coldness. She had been one of the most devoted of daughters, and Teresa's affectionate heart felt her behavior keenly. Little did the young Prioress foresee that it was the last time that she would see her holy Mother's face on earth, or the bitter regret that her little fit of ill humor would cause her in the days to come.

As for Teresa, half dead with weariness and pain, she went on without delay, her only thought being to console her companions in the discomforts they had to endure. At night they reached a miserable inn, where they could get no food. The Saint was faint with weakness, and Sister Anne tried in vain to get some eggs or something that an invalid could eat. Nothing could be procured but a few dried figs, which she brought to Teresa, weeping.

"Do not cry, dear sister," said the holy Mother; "the figs are very good; many poor people have not as much." The next day she was worse, and when she arrived at Alba the Prioress and the nuns, shocked at her appearance, made her go to bed at once. Teresa smiled. "It is true, my dear children," she said, "that I am very tired, but I have not been to bed so early for twenty years." Next day she arose in time for Mass and received Holy Communion. For a few days she insisted on following the community life, but at last had to declare herself vanquished.

They put her in a little room that looked on the chapel, where she lay and prayed in a happy silence. She was near her Lord, and that was all she desired. The sisters succeeded each other before the altar, praying, praying that God would spare that precious life; a heavy sorrow lay like a pall upon the house.

In the sickroom a strange perfume exhaled from the body of the dying Saint, all the more wonderful because the doctors had prescribed rubbing with an ill-smelling oil which they hoped would relieve the pain. Everybody who entered noticed it; the whole room was scented as with jasmine, lilies and roses. Teresa, who felt that the end was near, asked for the Last Sacraments.

It was five o'clock in the afternoon, and the last rays of the setting sun were lighting up the shadows when they brought her the Bread of Life. As she turned to greet her Divine Lord, her face shone once more with that radiant light that her daughters had so often seen while she prayed; she was as one transfigured, young and beautiful as of old. "I die the faithful daughter of the Church," she said, after asking pardon of those who were present for all that might have given them pain, and begging their prayers.

The night was spent in great suffering, though not a murmur of complaint passed her lips. At dawn, Sister Anne of St. Bartholomew, knowing the Saint's love of cleanliness, clothed her from head to foot in spotless linen, and was thanked by a loving and grateful smile. Lying on her side with the Crucifix in her hand, Teresa remained for the rest of the day, silent and motionless, lost in a loving contemplation of her crucified Lord. A supernatural beauty and joy shone from her face; those who were near watched her in an awestruck silence; such a chamber of death seemed to them like the gate of Heaven.

To Sister Anne, who had been Teresa's faithful companion for so many years, the thought of what life would be without her brought an almost unbearable sorrow. As toward evening she raised her tear-dimmed eyes to pray for help and comfort, she beheld in a vision Our Lord surrounded by Angels looking down with loving glance upon Teresa, as Sister Anne had seen Him stand and look once before in the refectory at St. Joseph's. As she gazed, the burden of her grief grew light; a divine consolation filled her heart, and she turned once more toward the bed. Even as she moved, the Saint sighed once or twice softly and entered into the life that is eternal.

So died St. Teresa, and how can that blessed passing be more eloquently described than in the words of the Saint herself?

“How sweet at the hour of death to go before Him whom we have loved above all things! What happiness to think we are not going to a strange country, but to our own country, since it is to the home of that adorable Spouse whom we love so much, and by whom we are so much loved!”



The Last Communion of St. Teresa

SAINT TERESA OF AVILA

The whole town was in an uproar. "Let Teresa keep quiet in her own convent," said the townspeople, "instead of trying to turn everything up-

side down!" What was the use, they asked, of going back to the Primitive Rule of Carmel with all its hardships, its solitude and its silence? Teresa was mad to think of leaving a convent where she was so comfortable. But Teresa knew the plan was from God, and her spiritual director had confirmed this. Teresa would not be turned aside by the opinions of anyone else.

Such was the soul of the great St. Teresa of Avila, reformer of the Carmelite Order. In her youth Teresa had all but forced herself to become a nun, and in the ensuing years she would also make many other courageous decisions. Her life would include remarkable mystical graces, fears of delusion by Satan, a vision of her potential place in Hell, many travels to found new Carmelite convents, work with other great Saints and dealings with difficult persons.

This is the story of the great St. Teresa of Avila, who was a woman of great heart and immense common sense and who was one of the most remarkable women in the history of the world. She reformed Carmel—thus making the Carmelite Order into a mother of Saints—and leaving a tremendous mark on the Catholic Church even to this day.

TAN

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REV. DR. LESLIE RUMBLE



A Brief
LIFE of CHRIST

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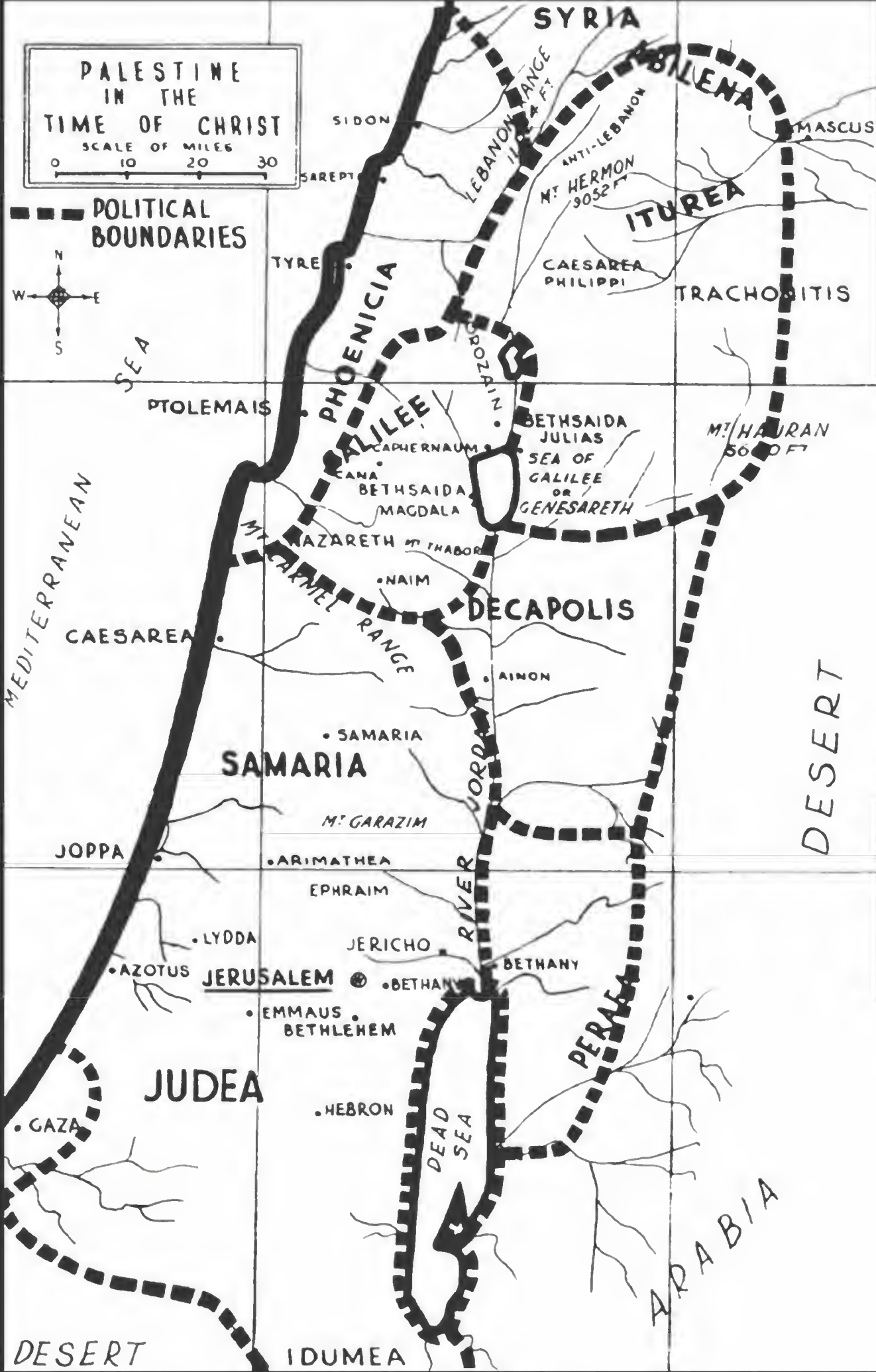
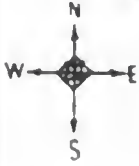
A BRIEF LIFE
OF
CHRIST

PALESTINE
IN THE
TIME OF CHRIST

SCALE OF MILES

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BOUNDARIES



A BRIEF LIFE OF CHRIST

By
The Convert From Anglicanism
Rev. Dr. L. Rumble, M.S.C.

For
Study Clubs and Inquiry Classes

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INTRODUCTORY

Jesus Christ, whose first name means “Saviour” and whose second name means “Anointed” or “Consecrated,” was born, not when our calendar says He was, but about six years earlier.

Our present calendar was drawn up by Dionysius Exiguus in the 6th century A.D., and we now know that he was some six years out in his calculations.

The mistake of Dionysius, of course, has nothing to do with the historical fact of Our Lord’s birth. It only means that what we thought of as, say, 1950 A.D., was really more like 1956 A.D.

For the actual facts about Christ we are mainly dependent upon the four gospels. These however have been subjected to an exhaustive examination such as no other documents have had to undergo, and their authenticity as documents is beyond reasonable dispute.

The authors were in a position to write thoroughly good history. Were the documents concerned with an ordinary man, and did they deal with none but ordinary utterances and events, no one would dream of doubting their reliability.

It is what they contain that unbelievers declare incredible; and that, only when the gospels mention things beyond the range of normal human experience. When they deal with all that belongs to the ordinary and natural sphere, research has shown them to be accuracy itself whether in regard to persons, places or things.

It is sheer prejudice against any religious revelation by God, and above all against the possibility of confirming such a revelation by miracles, which makes men regard the evangelists as either having taken leave of their senses, or else as having been positively dishonest, whenever they recorded as actual fact anything savoring of the supernatural or miraculous. These unbelievers have not approached the gospels with open minds, despite their boasting that they have done precisely that.

There is no room in this little book to discuss their position. Nor is there need to do so. It will be enough to set out briefly the life of Christ as depicted in the gospels, necessarily omitting much for purposes of condensation, but taking care in all that is said to remain strictly faithful to the basic facts recorded in our unimpeachable sources.

THE SETTING

Jesus was born in the little town of Bethlehem, in Palestine, a small country only 150 miles long and from 50 to 80 miles wide, on the extreme East coast of the Mediterranean Sea. Palestine, therefore, is only about half the size of the State of Indiana, in America.

It takes its name from the Philistines, a pagan people who settled on the coast of this country at about the same time as the Hebrews or People of Israel conquered the mountain land some 1300 years before the birth of Jesus.

At the time of His birth the People of Israel, called Jews after the main tribe of Juda, had themselves been conquered by the Romans. True, they had a king named Herod the Great; but he had been appointed by Rome and was subject to the Roman Emperor.

Herod the great died in 4 B.C., about two years after Jesus was born.

Then the Romans divided Palestine into four parts. One of Herod’s sons, Archelaus, was to rule over Judea and Samaria, in the South; another, Philip, was given Iturea in the North; a third son, Herod Antipas, ruled over Galilee in the Middle-West and Perea in the South-East; whilst Rome directly ruled over Decapolis, an area East of the Jordon.

When Jesus was a little boy of about twelve, Archelaus was deposed by the Romans for being too despotic, and Roman Governors were appointed instead, to rule over Judea and Samaria.

One of these Governors was Pontius Pilate, who was in charge from 26 A.D. until 36 A.D.

It was under Pontius Pilate that Jesus was to die.

The Jews were a religious people. All the nations around them were pagans, but they worshipped the one true God, carefully observing the laws given to them by Moses. The main centre of their worship was the great Temple in Jerusalem, the capital of Judea. In the different villages they had synagogues or meeting-places for prayer and the reading of the Scriptures; but sacrifice could be offered to God only in the one Temple at Jerusalem. Because of this, on great religious festivals thousands of Jews would flock there from all parts of Palestine, and even from other countries overseas.

Among the Jews there were several parties, two of which are very often mentioned in the gospels, the Pharisees and the Sadducees.

The Pharisees, or “Separated Ones,” claimed to observe the Mosaic Law perfectly, much better than the rest of the Jews. But whilst they were most exact outwardly, most of them were proud and very hard and uncharitable towards others. Not all were like that, of course. There were some really good, sincere and holy men among them.

The Sadducees, or “Descendants of Sadoc” (“Sadoc” means “Justice”), belonged to the richer classes. They were very worldly and, although they did not deny that the Law of Moses should be observed, they were not very strict about it. Many of them denied the existence of a future life and other orthodox teachings. Most of the Jewish priests belonged to these Sadducees.

The Jews, generally, were not very contented under the rule of the Romans; and as their religion taught them to look forwards towards a Messiah or divinely-sent Saviour, most of them hoped He would be a great political and military leader who would defeat the Romans and make themselves the greatest nation in the world.

Such was the setting in Palestine when Jesus was born in Bethlehem.



Adoration of the Magi, by Fra Angelico

BIRTH OF JESUS

Most biographies of people begin with an account of their birth, and, perhaps, of their family history. But whilst the life of Jesus as born into this world began in Bethlehem, it cannot be said that He personally began to exist only then. Before the Incarnation, He had always lived in Heaven; and it would be impossible to get back to the beginning of His life there, for He is the Eternal Son of God. To be eternal is to be without a beginning at all! But that aspect of His life would take us beyond recorded history as the world knows it.

St. John's gospel, however, tells us that one day He made this world, and indeed the whole universe, ages before He came into it Himself; and when He did come into our midst as Man to redeem and save us, He told us that He still belonged to Heaven; and always He spoke of it as only one could speak who is perfectly familiar with everything there. We shall meet with many such utterances in the course of His life on earth within the framework of history, the aspect of His life with which this booklet is concerned.

We have already said that Herod the Great died in the year 4 B.C., according to our present calendar. Now about three years before that, there was living at Nazareth, a little town in the hills of Galilee, a young Jewish girl named Mary. In the same town there dwelt a carpenter named Joseph to whom she was betrothed, and to whom she was soon to bind herself in the final marriage ceremonies. Both Mary and Joseph belonged to the tribe of Juda and were descendants of King David, although they were in poor circumstances, as were so many others of David's line.

One day, whilst Mary was alone at prayer, God sent the angel Gabriel to her with the tremendous news that the great Hope of Israel was to be fulfilled at last, and that she was to be the Mother of the Messiah. "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you," the angel said, appearing before her. "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the Holy One to be born of you shall be called the Son of God."

Mary replied: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord. Be it done unto me according to your word." And in that moment Jesus was miraculously conceived in her womb. The Divine Son, eternally generated of the Divine Father in Heaven without a mother, was to be born in a human nature of a human Mother without the intervention of any earthly father.

This would be incredible were it a question of any ordinary person. But Jesus, the Child of Mary, was not an ordinary person. The study of His character and of His subsequent career in this world is enough to show this, and that a miraculous entry into this world is the most fitting and natural thing to be expected in His case.

Nor have we only Mary's word for the fact of the miraculous conception of Jesus. The truth about it was independently revealed to Joseph. "Joseph, son of David," an angel said to him also, "fear not to take Mary as your wife, for it is by the power of the Holy Ghost that she has conceived this child."

So the formalities of the marriage were completed; and when her time was come. Joseph having taken her to Bethlehem, she brought forth her Child there, in the village known as the city of David. They had gone there in obedience to a Decree of Caesar Augustus, the Roman Emperor, ordering all to report at that time in their home towns for purposes of a census.

Divine notification of the coming of the Messiah had already been given to Elizabeth, Mary's cousin; and now that He had come, the fact was revealed to a little group of shepherds out on the nearby hills. Angels appeared to them, bringing them the news that "this day is born to you a Savior," and delighting them with their lovely song of praise and consolation: "Glory to God in the Highest, and peace on earth to men of goodwill." Needless to say, the shepherds went at once with great joy to visit Him.

Magi, or wise men from the East, came also, under heavenly guidance; but their coming alarmed the old king Herod the Great, who was half mad with suspicions of possible rivals in his last distraught days. As a precaution, he ordered the murder of all male children under two years of age in Bethlehem and its vicinity. But Joseph had been divinely warned to take the Child and His Mother to Egypt, in order to escape the slaughter.



Flight into Egypt, by Fra Angelico

CHILDHOOD AT NAZARETH

After the death of Herod in 4 B.C. the little family returned. Joseph had intended to settle at Bethlehem; but since the brutal Archelaus, one of Herod's sons, had been appointed ruler of Judea, he thought it wiser to go back to Nazareth, in Galilee, which was under the control of another of Herod's sons, Herod Antipas.

At Nazareth Jesus was brought up as a pious Jewish Child and He was the only Child. Those called "brothers and sisters" in the gospels were but cousins at most. It was customary among the Jews to call any relatives within the same tribe "brethren."

From the age of six or seven, children would attend the local synagogue where they were taught their religion and the other ordinary subjects, reading, writing and simple arithmetic. Jesus became deeply versed both in Jewish traditions and in the Scriptures. In His discourses later on, quotations are to be found from many books of the Old Testament. Owing to the presence of so many Gentiles in Galilee, He would almost certainly have learned to speak Greek; but Greek philosophical and religious ideas contributed in no way towards His education. There are no traces of them in His later utterances.

Of the sheer goodness and virtue which reigned in that little home at Nazareth there is no need to speak. There, St. Luke tells us, "Jesus grew in wisdom and grace with God and men."

One incident only is given us concerning the childhood of Jesus at Nazareth. Every year Joseph and Mary used to make the eighty-mile journey to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Passover, a great religious festival like our Easter, celebrating the "exodus" or delivery of the Jews by Moses from slavery in Egypt about 1300 B.C.

Children were allowed to attend the ceremonies from about the age of twelve; and we are told that at that age Jesus went with Joseph and Mary to Jerusalem for the festival. There He became separated from them in the immense crowds, and they searched for Him for three days before finding Him in the Temple discussing religion with the Jewish teachers, whom He had astonished by manifesting an understanding of the Scriptures far greater than was natural to any boy of twelve. And still more characteristically supernatural, if anything, was the way in which He spoke to His Mother when she found Him.

She had exclaimed: "My Son, why have you behaved like this, causing your father and myself so much anxiety in searching for you?" To which He replied: "What need had you to search for Me? Did you not know that I must be in My Father's house?" As the Eternal Son of God who had come into this world, He stressed that His duty to His heavenly Father was above all lesser loyalties; and these first recorded words of Jesus were a veiled declaration of His Divinity, the implications of which not even Joseph and Mary had yet fully grasped.

He at once went down to Nazareth with them, however, and was subject to them.

Of the next eighteen years we are told nothing, except that He followed Joseph's trade, so that He was spoken of as "the carpenter, the son of Mary." At some time during those eighteen years Joseph died and Jesus worked on, putting a little by to provide for His Mother's future against the time when He Himself would have to leave her.



Baptism of Christ, by Giovanni Bellini

JOHN THE BAPTIST

When Jesus was about thirty, in the 15th year of the reign of the Roman Emperor, Tiberius Caesar, a prophet who had been living like a hermit in the desert came to the River Jordan some miles East of Jerusalem and just North of the Dead Sea. There he began to preach to the people, baptizing in the river waters all whom he converted.

He was known as John the Baptist, the son of Zachary and Mary's relative Elizabeth, and was, therefore, a relative of Jesus Himself.

We know nothing of John between his birth and his sudden appearance on the banks of the Jordan. His father, however, had told him of the revelation at his birth that he was to prepare the way of the Lord.

At that time there was keen excitement among the Jews. Everyone was talking about the promised Messiah; and, although the leaders took no notice of John, the common people were deeply impressed by him. Ever-growing crowds flocked to hear him, and he did his utmost to bring them to a sincere repentance of their sins. He demanded humility instead of pride, genuine goodness instead of empty talk about it; and he did not spare the hypocrisy of the Scribes and Pharisees.

Constantly he had to reply to questions that people kept asking about himself. Was he the prophet? Was he the Christ, the Messiah? Was he the Great One, promised of old? But to them all John said no, he was not. He described himself as only a voice crying in the wilderness. The Messiah was to come, and very soon. He, John, was but a poor messenger, preparing the way for him.

JESUS BEGINS HIS MINISTRY

John's mission was the sign that it was time for Jesus to begin His public life. He therefore left Nazareth and went to the Jordan where John was preaching and asked to be baptized. John protested, but Jesus insisted; and as He was baptized the Holy Spirit descended upon Him from Heaven in the form of a dove, and a voice came, saying: "Thou art my beloved Son. In Thee I am well pleased." Jesus had not come to receive John's baptism as a sinner needing to be cleansed, but He had come to receive the divine approval for the solemn beginning of His mission as the Teacher and Saviour of mankind.

After His baptism, Jesus at once went into the barren hill-country of Judea to give Himself to prayer and fasting for forty days, at the end of which time the devil came to tempt Him.

In the Incarnation the Eternal Son of God had taken as His own a truly human nature, and He allowed the devil to suggest the use of His miraculous powers to satisfy His own bodily craving for food after so long a fast, and even to adopt the ways of the world in order to win the world, performing startling prodigies and doing homage to Satan at the expense of His heavenly Father's claims upon Him. The devil's idea was to offer an easy road to success in founding an earthly kingdom in accordance with popular Jewish aspirations at the time.

But Jesus had come neither to seek His own comfort, nor to establish a kingdom of this world. He rejected the temptations, three times declaring simply that the Will of God, with which the devil's suggestions could not possibly be reconciled, was the one thing of supreme importance.

Defeated, the devil left Him; and angels came and ministered to Him.

Jesus then returned to John the Baptist, whom He had left six weeks before, in order to begin His ministry side by side with the Precursor. But the holy prophet, seeing Him coming towards the place where he was baptizing, said to the bystanders: "This is He of whom I have been speaking to you. Behold the Lamb of God!"

Two of John's disciples, one of them also named John, and the other Andrew, followed Jesus later as He was returning to His lodgings, and spent the evening with Him. He told them of the Kingdom of God He had come to establish, and answered all their eager questions. Next day Andrew went to find his brother Simon. "We have found the Messiah," he told Simon, and brought him to Jesus. As soon as He met him, Jesus changed Simon's name to Peter, in Aramaic "Kepha," a word meaning "rock." But Simon was not told at that time why his name was changed.

Later, James the brother of John joined the little group; then Philip; and he in turn brought Nathanael also. In those few first hours, therefore, Jesus had won six disciples, all of whom were later to be numbered among His twelve Apostles.

JOURNEY TO GALILEE

Three days after this Jesus set out for Galilee, taking His new disciples, who were all Galileans, with Him.

On the way, they came to the village of Cana. They arrived in time for a wedding-feast to which He and His disciples had been invited; and there He met His Mother who had been invited also, and who had come from Nazareth, four miles away, in order to be present.

It was there, at His Mother's request, that He performed His first miracle, after declaring that the time for such manifestations of His divine power had really not yet come. But the wine had given out, and His Mother was concerned about the embarrassment this would be to their hosts. In order to please His Mother, then, and spare them the embarrassment, He turned water into a plentiful supply of wine. Only a week ago He had refused to turn stones into bread. Here, however, it was not a matter of satisfying His own hunger, but of providing for the needs of others.

From Cana He went to Capharnaum, then a flourishing village on the shores of the Lake of Galilee.

Capharnaum was to become the centre for His work in Galilee, but this time He did not stay long. Almost a week later He was in Jerusalem, having journeyed eighty miles to be present in the Holy City for the Feast of the Passover.

There, indignant at the desecration of the Temple by the trading that was going on within its precincts, He gave the first display of His prophetic authority in public, flogging the merchants and all the animals out of the premises with a whip, and overturning the tables of the money-changers. "It is written: My House is a House of Prayer," He said, "but you have made it a den of thieves."

The Scribes and Pharisees and Priests were very angry at this and crowded round Him, demanding what right He had to act in such a way. He wrought no miracle then to justify His divine authority, but merely said: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up again." He was referring to the temple of His body, knowing that eventually they would kill Him, but that on the third day after that He would rise again from the dead. For the time being, however, He left them to puzzle it out for themselves.

One of the Pharisees, a member of the Sanhedrin or Council of the Jews, a man named Nicodemus, was deeply impressed by the majesty and power of Jesus. So he came to Him at night, being afraid to do so openly, wanting to know just what new teaching He had to give.

Jesus explained to him that the Messianic kingdom was not to be one of political and worldly power. It was to be one of God's rule within souls lifted to a higher plane of life than any earthly parents could give. This new life would require a new birth by water and the Holy Spirit. Jesus here spoke of the new, greater and sacramental rite of baptism which John the Baptist had said would far surpass his own and be proper to the Messiah.

The very idea of such a baptismal re-birth was quite beyond Nicodemus and he frankly admitted it. Jesus therefore said to him: "If you cannot understand that God's Spirit is needed to give a spiritual life, how can you grasp even deeper heavenly mysteries? But at least believe Me when I tell you of them. I am speaking of what I know, for I have come from heaven, even as I am still in heaven. No other man on earth can speak of them from personal experience, for no man has been to heaven and back to be able to do so." And He continued: "God so loved the world as to give His only-begotten Son; and He must be lifted up as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so that all who look to Him may be saved."

Nicodemus went away, thoughtful and profoundly moved; and there could be no doubt that eventually he, too, would become a disciple. In fact, it was he who, after the crucifixion, assisted Joseph of Arimathea in providing honorable burial for the body of Christ, and he has been revered by the Church through the ages as St. Nicodemus.

The bitter hostility of the Scribes and Pharisees generally, however, made it quite clear that the message of Jesus had no chance of acceptance in Jerusalem; but He had at least offered Himself to the Jewish authorities there as the Messiah. Now He withdrew from the Holy City, devoting Himself to preaching and healing the sick among the country people of Judea.

After a few months there came the sad news that John the Baptist had been cast into prison by Herod Antipas, who was angered by John's denunciation of his immorality. This meant the end of the Precursor's mission, and Jesus at once began in earnest His own great life-work.

Taking His disciples with Him, He left for Galilee, passing through Samaria on the way.

He preached the actual arrival of the Kingdom of God, urging people to repent of their sins and to accept the good news or gospel being offered to them from heaven.

Usually in His discourses He was silent about His own Messiahship because of the prevalence of so many wrong ideas about the coming of a political leader to make of the Jews the greatest nation on earth.

To the Samaritans, however, who were not so deeply affected by these notions as were the Jews, He spoke plainly. Thus, at Jacob's well, He replied, "I am He" to the woman of Samaria who had mentioned the Messiah whom God had

promised to send. Elsewhere He called Himself, as a rule, the “Son of Man;” but He spoke always as a prophet and teacher of marvellous authority, shown equally in His words and work.

On His journey through Galilee He stopped at Cana where He had wrought the miracle of water turned into wine, and whilst He was there one of King Herod’s officers came to Him from Capharnaum, twenty miles away, begging Him to come and save his dying son. Jesus told him simply not to worry for the boy was cured. On the way home, met by servants who had run to tell him the good news that the boy had suddenly recovered, the officer asked when, only to be told that it was precisely at 1 p.m., the very time when Jesus had spoken to him. He and his whole family, therefore, believed in the claims of Jesus.



Christ Preaches to the Apostles, by Duccio

THE KINGDOM AND THE APOSTLES

St. Luke tells us that Jesus, having “returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee, the fame of Him went out through the whole country. And He taught in their synagogues and was magnified by all. And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up.”

Here particularly was verified the declaration in St. John’s gospel that “He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.” His claim in the synagogue at Nazareth to be the One whose advent had been predicted by Isaiah the prophet was rejected with the scornful remark that He was but the son of Joseph the carpenter; and sadly exclaiming that “no prophet is accepted in his own country,” He went down to Capharnaum on the lakeside, making that town headquarters for His Galilean ministry.

On the first Sabbath after His arrival in Capharnaum, He spoke in the synagogue and met with a very different reception from that given Him in Nazareth. The people were enthusiastic about His teaching, sensing a divine authority in His words far beyond anything they had experienced in those of the Scribes and Pharisees. Moreover, at the end of His discourse, Jesus with a word cast the evil spirit out of a possessed man so that the people, amazed, spread far and wide the story of the incident.

Leaving the synagogue for the home of Peter and Andrew, He there found the mother of Peter’s wife ill with fever, but He cured her at once and she prepared a meal for them all.

That evening crowds of sick people were brought to Him and He healed their diseases, working late into the night; yet, tired as He must have been, He rose before daybreak and went off to a lonely place in the hills to pray, a habit of His all His life.

From Capharnaum He made many preaching tours through Galilee, meeting with ever-growing success.

He had come, however, to establish a Kingdom, as He Himself had declared, saying: “I must preach the Kingdom of God, for therefore am I sent.” Although this Kingdom was not to be of the world, it was to be in this world and to last till the end of time, long after He Himself had returned to the Heaven from which He came. For the foundation of this Kingdom He was to choose from among His disciples twelve men whom He would train personally before sending them out to continue His work.

One evening, therefore, in preparation for this, He went alone into the mountains and prayed all through the night. Next morning He called His disciples together and chose the twelve, conferring upon them the title of Apostles.

The chosen ones were Simon Peter; Andrew; James; John; Philip; Nathanael, known also as Bartholomew; Matthew; Thomas; James, the son of Alphaeus; Simon Zelotes; Jude, the brother of James; and Judas Iscariot, who eventually was to betray Him.

This was one of the greatest events of history, the beginning of the Church as the Kingdom of God on earth. And it was followed by one of the most important utterances ever to come from human lips. For immediately afterwards, with His newly-chosen Apostles about Him, He gave to the people the great discourse known as the “Sermon on the Mount.”

So Jesus who had come, as He said, not to destroy the Law and the Prophets but to usher in their perfect fulfillment, laid the foundations of the “Kingdom of God” or the “Kingdom of Heaven” (He spoke of it in both ways) which He called His Church.

MANIFESTATIONS OF DIVINE POWER

At about this same time Jesus made a brief visit to Jerusalem for one of the festival days. Whilst there He healed a man on the Sabbath who had been crippled for thirty-eight years, to the scandal of the Scribes and Pharisees once more.

In answer to their complaints He asserted that He had all the rights of God over the Sabbath, that He was equally God with His Father, and that some day at His bidding all men would rise from their graves and that He would be their Judge.

This filled His critics with still more anger and strengthened their determination to find ways and means to kill Him.

Leaving Jerusalem, He returned to Galilee and continued preaching in various synagogues; but representatives of the Scribes and Pharisees followed Him wherever He went, spying upon Him, interrupting Him, disputing with Him, and gathering all the information which they thought they could later use against Him. But Jesus went on teaching and doing good.

One day, as He entered a village, a poor leper met Him and cried out piteously: “Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean.” Jesus reached out and touched him, saying: “I will. Be thou cleansed.” The leprosy at once vanished and the man was

bidden to go and to report himself to the priest as cured.

The fame of the miracle quickly spread and when Jesus arrived at last in Capharnaum people came in such numbers to the house where He was staying that the room was overflowing, with crowds outside trying, yet unable to get in.

As He was teaching them, a paralyzed man was brought by some friends. These tore away the tiles of the roof since there was no other means of entry, and let the patient down by ropes to the feet of Jesus. Far from being angry, Jesus was deeply moved and said to the sick man: "Thy sins are forgiven thee." The Scribes and Pharisees present thought: "This at any rate, is blasphemy. Who can forgive sins but God alone?" Jesus, however, reading their minds, said: "You think I have not that power? Then see this!" Turning to the palsied man, He said: "Take up your bed and go home." The man at once did so, to the amazement of all. And on all sides people glorified God, saying: "We have never seen anything like this before!"

A few days later He healed the sick servant of a Roman centurion at the request of the Jewish people who urged that, although he was a heathen, the centurion had built a synagogue for them.

On the morning after that, He left at daybreak for Naim, a village some twenty-four miles away. He arrived there in the evening—the time when funerals usually took place—and met that of a dead boy, the only son of a poor widow. "Weep not," He said to the mother; and with a word He restored her son to life, to her great consolation and the further astonishment of all who saw or heard of it.

The news spread like wildfire; the excitement was intense; the popularity of Jesus with the people was at its height.

SPEAKING IN PARABLES

With the Twelve, Jesus travelled through the towns and villages of Galilee, preaching everywhere the Kingdom of God.

Much of His teaching He gave in the form of parables or stories, in accordance with Jewish ways at the time. And all kinds of subjects were dealt with in this way.

It is not possible to discuss all the parables at any length in this small book, nor to treat of them in the order in which they were given. We can but touch briefly on some of the many aspects of His teaching given at different times by this means, referring readers to the gospels themselves for a more extensive study of them.

In the parable of the "Sower and the Seed" (*Mark* 4:1-20), He warned His listeners that if His teaching awakened no response within them, the fault would lie in their own evil dispositions.

Of such evil dispositions they should repent, confident that God, on His part, will welcome them with infinite mercy. A "Shepherd seeking a Lost Sheep," a "Woman seeking a Lost Coin," a "Father" rejoicing in the return of a "Prodigal Son" (*Luke* 15:1-32), are but faint images of God's attitude towards souls repenting of the sins separating them from Him.

Think, He begged them, of what is at stake. It is no less than the "Kingdom of Heaven," for which no sacrifice is too great; even as a man will sell all to buy a "Field containing buried Treasure," or a merchant to gain a "Pearl of Great Price." (*Matthew* 13:44-46).

That Kingdom of Heaven is brought within their reach by His Church, small now as a "Mustard Seed," but to grow into an immense and spreading tree affording shelter for all who seek rest within it. (*Matthew* 13:31-32). Scandals will arise, yes; for the Church will be in a world like to a "Field sown with Good Grain," but which enemies will oversow with "Cockle or Tares." It will be like a "Net holding Good and Bad Fish." (*Matthew* 13:24-50). Nevertheless, there is nothing wrong with the "Net," and the Church is indeed the Kingdom of Heaven on earth.

Sadly, however, Jesus warned the Jews that their official leaders and their nation as a whole would reject the grace being offered to them, as the "Invited Guests" made all kinds of excuses for refusing to attend the "Great Supper." (*Luke* 14:17-24). They would even eventually put Him to death, as the "Wicked Husbandmen" in the vineyard planned to murder the very son of the proprietor. (*Mark* 12:1-12).

Of those who do come to the Kingdom, despite this national rejection of it, much will be expected.

They must be the enemies of sin, making sure that they are clothed in the "Wedding Garment" of divine grace. (*Matthew* 22:11-14). As "Leaven" transforms bread, that grace will transform their souls. (*Luke* 13:21).

But they must co-operate generously with this grace, making good use of whatever "Talents" God has given them. (*Matthew* 25:14-30).

Above all, charity will be required of them; forgiving others, instead of behaving like the "Unmerciful Servant" (*Matthew* 18:23-35); relieving the needs of the poor, not imitating the attitude of the selfish "Rich Man" towards "Lazarus the

Beggar" (*Luke 16:19-31*); being a "Good Samaritan" to all in distress, of whatever kind it might be. (*Luke 10:25-37*).

Nor must any quarter be given to the pride of the "Pharisee" who thought himself such a paragon of virtue in comparison with the "Publican." (*Luke 18:9-14*).

Surely they should be as earnest in preparing for their eternal destiny as was the "Unjust Steward" in looking to his merely temporal future (*Luke 18:1-8*), and in taking every care to avoid the fate that overtook the "Rich Fool." (*Luke 12:13-21*).

Always to be kept in mind is the fact that there will most certainly be a Last Judgment, when the good and the wicked will be divided as the "Sheep and the Goats" (*Matthew 25:31-46*); and that it is essential not to be found then as the "Foolish Virgins" who were taken by surprise only to find no oil in their lamps. (*Matthew 25:1-13*).

INCREASING POPULARITY

For almost a year Jesus had been teaching, mighty in word and work, throughout Galilee, His popularity increasing daily. More and more widespread became the conviction that He was indeed a great prophet, and even perhaps the Messiah. But the people were soon to learn that He was definitely not the kind of Messiah they were expecting.

How hard He was working at this time can be gathered from the following typical incidents.

One day, near Capharnaum, He had been explaining His doctrine and persuading the people almost from daylight till dark; and, as evening fell, seeing how great the constantly increasing crowd had become, He asked the disciples to take Him by boat across the Lake.

During the journey a fierce storm arose suddenly, the waves threatening to swamp the little ship, and the disciples were thoroughly frightened. Jesus, tired out, was asleep in the stern of the vessel, so they woke Him, saying: "Master, is it nothing to you that we perish?" Jesus replied: "Why are you afraid? Is your faith still so weak?" Then He bade the wind stop and the sea to be still, both immediately obeying, so that a great calm at once prevailed. Despite all the previous miracles they had witnessed the disciples could scarcely believe their senses, and said to one another: "Who can He be? Even the winds and the sea obey Him!"

At daybreak they arrived at the opposite shore of the Lake, in what was known sometimes as the country of the Gerasenes, sometimes as that of the Gadarenes. Near to where they landed there was an old cemetery, and at once a poor lunatic possessed by devils rushed towards them from among the tombs. Making straight for Jesus, he fell at His feet, crying out: "Why do you interfere with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I implore you not to torment me." The poor man was not responsible for what he was saying. The devils impelled him to speak as he did; and Jesus cast them out of the man into a herd of swine feeding on the mountainside. These, filled with frenzy, hurled themselves down the slopes into the sea and were drowned.

The men who had been looking after the animals ran off to tell others what had happened, and soon many of the country-folk from the district came and begged Jesus to leave their coasts; they were so afraid of what He might do next!

To the disciples, however, the lesson was one of great significance. Acting as only God could do, He wrought miracles such as had not been heard of "from the beginning of the world," proving His dominion over the whole of creation, not only over inanimate things, not only over the vegetative and animal worlds, but over those evil spirits also from whose power He had come to deliver mankind.

Making their way back to the boat, they set out across the Lake once more. It was broad daylight, and as the people of Capharnaum could easily see them coming, a great crowd gathered to welcome them.

Among those anxiously waiting to see Jesus and talk to Him was an official of the synagogue named Jairus. As soon as Jesus landed, therefore, he begged Him to come and heal his dying daughter. Jesus set out with him for the house, the people thronging around them.

A woman in the crowd, suffering from a twelve year old disease, edged her way towards Him, touched the hem of His garment, and was instantly cured. Divinely aware of this, Jesus proclaimed for the benefit of all present both the fact of her cure and that it was her great spirit of faith which had won for her so wonderful a favor. It was a faith He was asking of them all.

There had been some delay, and before they arrived at the house of Jairus a servant came to say that his daughter had died and that it was now useless for Jesus to come any farther. But Jesus consoled the poor father, told him to believe firmly

still, and that all would be well.

At the house, He allowed only Peter, James and John, together with the father and the mother, to enter the dead girl's room with Him. In their presence, He merely took her hand and said: "Talitha cumi." ("Little girl, get up.") Then he bade the parents to see that she had something to eat, adding that they were not to broadcast the news of what He had done. The excitement of the enthusiastic crowd outside could easily give rise to charges against Him of causing a tumult. Such charges would come soon enough!

So Jesus gave Himself to all who needed Him, and not only preached the gospel of His new spiritual Kingdom, confirming His mission by signs and miracles in village after village throughout the country, but gave authority and power to His Apostles also, sending them out in twos to do the same.

DEATH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

During the absence of the Apostles on their mission, as He Himself continued His labors, news came to Him which was a kind of portent of what was to be His own fate.

John the Baptist had been put to death by Herod Antipas who, in a drunken moment during a scandalous banquet, had yielded to the demand of the woman with whom he was living in incest and adultery for "the head of John the Baptist in a dish."

John was the last of the prophets of the Old Testament and the first of the New. He stands like the dividing-line between the two great Covenants.

What Jesus thought of him we know. "A prophet?" He had said of him. "Truly, I tell you, more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written: Behold I send my angel before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee. For I say to you: Amongst those born of woman, there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist."

To the astonishment of His listeners, He then took occasion to add that the least of those actually received into the Church He Himself was establishing and who enjoyed the full blessing of His Kingdom, would be greater than John the Baptist!

MIRACLE OF THE LOAVES

Shortly after John's death the twelve Apostles returned to Jesus from a month's hard work, excited, but very tired; and Jesus said to them: "Come apart with Me and rest awhile." So they took a boat and went some distance along the shore of the Lake to find a quiet place away from the crowds.

The people, however, were not so easily shaken off. Seeing the direction in which the boat was going, they hurried round by land, and when Jesus got to the place He had in mind He found an immense throng already there.

Taking pity on these "sheep without a shepherd," He spent the rest of the day instructing them. They had brought no food with them, but they were so entranced by all He had to say to them that they did not dream of leaving so long as He continued speaking.

At last it began to grow dark and the Apostles suggested to Him that they should be told to go to nearby villages to buy food for themselves. Jesus replied: "There's no need for them to go. You give them food." Philip said to Him: "We'd have to get about fifty dollars' worth of provisions, to give them a mere pittance each!"

There were over five thousand people present, Capharnaum being full of visitors at the time from all parts of the country, who were making their way to Jerusalem for the rapidly approaching Feast of the Passover.

Andrew, the brother of Peter, interjected, saying: "There's a boy here, with five barley loaves and two fishes; but what are these among so many?"

Jesus was in no way perturbed. "Tell the people," He said, "to sit down." The people sat down on the grass, in rows of hundred-and-fifties.

He then took the loaves, raised His eyes to heaven, offered a prayer, broke the bread, gave some to each of the Apostles, and told them to distribute it among their guests. As they did so, they must have felt like men in a dream, for the supply in their hands kept increasing. The same thing happened also with the fish; and after all had had enough, there were twelve baskets of

fragments remaining.

The meal finished, Jesus told the Apostles to set out for home by boat, leaving Him to dismiss the people.

The people, however, were reluctant to go, and in their enthusiasm decided to proclaim Him as their King there and then. But Jesus wanted something better than a faith bound up with miraculous temporal benefits and the triumphant nationalism they had in mind. So He refused their offer and escaped from them into the neighboring hills, to their great displeasure—a displeasure which, with many, was to turn to open hostility within twenty-four hours!



Institution of the Eucharist, by Fra Angelico

THE BREAD OF LIFE

For next day, in the synagogue at Capharnaum, having returned to the town during the night, Jesus told the people that the bread with which He had miraculously fed them the day before was not worth having compared with that which He intended to give them later on. This other bread would be Himself, and in receiving it they would be eating His very flesh and drinking His very blood. Moreover, this food would give eternal life and not merely keep them alive for a little longer in this world, which is all that ordinary food can do.

Most of those present were horrified by these words. Talking among themselves, they said that He was going altogether too far, making it impossible for them to accept His teaching. And many, who had been His disciples till then, abandoned Him altogether.

Needless to say, the Scribes and Pharisees were delighted at the turn things were taking, and worked among the discontented people to make them active enemies of Jesus with themselves.

This marked a critical change in the life of Jesus in this world. Between the approaching Passover and that of next year, which was to be His last, He never again met with enthusiasm from vast crowds as He had up till then, except on one isolated occasion. Henceforth, thrown back more and more upon the twelve Apostles, He concentrated on training them for their future work.

One stormy encounter with Scribes and Pharisees who had come from Jerusalem marked the closing of His ministry in Galilee. They attacked Him for violating their traditions, whereupon He denounced their hypocrisy and their man-made traditions, declaring them to be “blind leaders of the blind.”

Then, taking the twelve, He shook the dust of Galilee off His feet and went elsewhere.

PETER THE ROCK

Jesus and the Apostles, having left the territory of Herod Antipas, spent some months travelling through Phoenicia and Decapolis, eventually coming to Caesarea Philippi, at one of the sources of the Jordan beyond the northern border of Galilee. There an event of the utmost importance for His Church took place.

The very name “Caesarea” and “Philippi” bespoke the dominance of Rome and Greece. They were symbols excluding all dreams of a Jewish national kingdom. And there, in that depressing place as regards Jewish hopes of political supremacy, Jesus put a direct question to the twelve about Himself. “What,” He asked them, “do people think of Me?”

They all began to speak at once. “Some say You are John the Baptist, come back to life again; others say no, but that You are Elias, or Jeremias.”

“And you yourself, what do you think?”

Peter spoke up instantly: “You are the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of the Living God.”

It was a clear declaration of his divinity among all the shifting sands of vague opinions.

“If you know that,” Jesus said to him, “it is not because you have thought of it for yourself, but because My Father in heaven has revealed it to you. And now, in turn, I say to you: You are Peter, the rock, as I called you when I changed your name from that of Simon; and upon this rock I will build My Church. The forces of evil will never prevail against it. And I will give to you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven.”

It was not enough, however, that the twelve should know the fact that He was the Messiah. They had still much to learn about the nature of His mission. So Jesus went on to explain to them that He must go up to Jerusalem, to be there rejected, tortured, and put to death by His own people; that only thus could He redeem them; but that on the third day He would rise again.

The shock of this declaration was so great that the last words were completely overlooked; and Peter, unable to reconcile himself to such treatment of His adored Master, exclaimed impulsively: “God forbid. Nothing like that must happen to You.”

But Jesus told him that to try to prevent it would be to play the part of Satan. “You would have Me,” He said, “turn aside from the very thing I came into this world to do! You are thinking as men think, and not seeing things as God sees them. Not self-interest, but self-sacrifice is demanded of Me. And if any man will come after Me, he too must deny himself, take up his cross and follow Me.”

TRAINING OF THE TWELVE

Again and again, from then on, Jesus tried to impress upon the minds of the Twelve that He had to endure an ignominious passion of suffering and death.

But He did not neglect measures to confirm them in their faith, and to reassure them of His ultimate triumph.

Only six days after Peter's profession of faith He took Peter and James and John with Him up to a high mountain-top, and was there transfigured before them, His face shining radiantly, His clothes glorious with an unearthly whiteness. Two men were conversing with Him, whom the Apostles recognized as Moses and Elias, representatives of the Old Testament Law and the Prophets. They were talking about the very thing Jesus had been stressing all the week, the necessity of His passion and death. And in the midst of it all a voice came from Heaven: "This is My Beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Hear ye Him."

The whole experience raised the thoughts of the Apostles to the divine level; but it was for themselves alone. "Tell the vision to no man," Jesus said to them afterwards, "till the Son of Man be risen from the dead."

From now on, concentrating more intensely still on the formation of the Twelve, He gave them many lessons bearing upon their own spiritual lives, above all on the necessity for prayer, of humility, and of the forgiving of injuries.

One day, setting a little child in the midst of them, He said: "Whosoever shall humble himself as this little child, he is the greater in the Kingdom of Heaven."

Then, thinking of the welfare of little children themselves, He added severely that it would be better to have a millstone tied round one's neck and to be thrown into the sea, than to teach evil to any one of them.

"Despise not one of these little ones," He said, "for I tell you, their angels in Heaven always see the face of My Father who is in Heaven." He knew what the angels do in Heaven, for He was, as He had described Himself: "The Son of Man, descended from Heaven, but who yet is in Heaven."

As to the forgiveness of injuries, to Peter, who thought it generous that pardon should be granted seven times, Jesus replied: "Not seven times, but seventy-times seven times," or indefinitely.

VISIT TO JERUSALEM

So the instructions continued, in between the various duties of the ministry, until in the October of that year the Feast of Tabernacles, a kind of Harvest Festival, was at hand. Many were accustomed to going up to Jerusalem for the festivities, and Jesus decided to go also. Afterwards He intended to work in Judea rather than in Galilee.

After His journeying through Phoenicia and Decapolis, He had returned for a brief stay at Capharnaum. Setting out from there along the road towards Nazareth, He came to the heights of Magdala and paused at that vantage point to have a last look back at the Sea of Galilee and the towns along its Northern shores. Sad at heart, He reproached the cities for their resistance to divine grace, saying: "Woe to you, Corozain; woe to you, Bethsaida; woe to you, Capharnaum. If the miracles done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented. If they had been done even in Sodom, that place would have been spared. In the day of judgment it will go easier with those wicked cities than with yourselves." Then he turned, and set His face resolutely towards Jerusalem.

His journey took Him through Samaria, and at one village, to which James and John had gone ahead to prepare accommodation, they were refused hospitality on the ground that the party was travelling to the Jerusalem so hated by the Samaritans. The two Apostles returned to Jesus full of indignation and wanted to call down fire upon the town as Elias had done upon the insolent villagers. But Jesus quietly reproved them, telling them that they certainly had not the right spirit yet. It was one thing for Himself to declare what would be the just judgment of God on the Galilean cities which had refused divine grace; but it was not for them to invoke disasters upon villagers who had merely refused hospitality to strangers. Patiently, therefore, He went on with them to another village.

Arrived within the vicinity of Jerusalem, Jesus stayed in the little town of Bethany, only about two miles from the Holy City. St. John says simply, in his gospel: "Jesus loved Martha, and her sister Mary, and Lazarus." These were friends in whose house He was always welcome; and that home He often visited during His ministry in Judea.

CLASH WITH THE PHARISEES

During these days of the Feast of Tabernacles, He Himself was the main topic of conversation. Many Galileans were already there before He arrived, and people were asking whether He, too, was coming. Opinions about Him were very divided. Some said that He was a good man; others that He was a fraud and a deceiver.

Suddenly, one day, He appeared in the Temple court, and there began to teach the people openly. He spoke about Himself more clearly than ever before and the people were amazed at His utterances as He answered all that was being said against Him by His enemies.

No. He had not studied in the Rabbinical schools in Jerusalem. But then, His doctrine was not of men; it was directly from God. Yes. He had healed the sick on the Sabbath day. But circumcision was performed on the Sabbath day, and far from breaking the Law of Moses, was performed precisely to keep that Law; and He certainly was not breaking the Law by giving the blessing of health. They knew His family and could point to His relatives, maybe; but they had not made allowance for His heavenly mission of which His miracles were the guarantee.

The Scribes and Pharisees present, unable to bear this, discussed the possibility of arresting Him, but scarcely knew how to go about it. Too many of the people were sympathetically disposed towards Him. The Sanhedrin sent some officers to try, but the officers returned empty-handed, excusing themselves by saying: "Never did man speak like this man."

Evidently the thing to do was to undermine His standing with the people. Next day, therefore, when He was again speaking in the Temple courtyard, the Scribes and Pharisees thought to force the issue by bringing to Him a woman taken in adultery.

Moses, they said, commanded such a one to be stoned to death. What did He say? They thought, diabolically, that if He agreed to her death He would forfeit the sympathy of the people; if He released her, they themselves could challenge Him with having publicly flouted the Law of Moses.

But all His divine wisdom was at the disposal of His mercy. Without denying the Law of Moses, He said, with words full of meaning and authority: "Very well. But let him that is without sin among you cast the first stone."

Speechless, they edged away, beginning with the eldest. They had the feeling that He was reading them like a book. As for the poor woman, forgiveness did not mean condonation. "Go," He said, "and now, sin no more."

Jesus continued His discourses. He declared Himself to be the "Light of the World." Whilst others were but "of earth," He was "of Heaven." If people wanted freedom, let them follow Him; for His disciples would know that true freedom which is freedom from sin.

This was too much for the Pharisees, who cried out that they had such freedom and were already acceptable in God's sight as children of Abraham. But Jesus countered by saying that Abraham himself was overjoyed by the sight of His advent.

"What," they replied, "you are not yet fifty years old, and you have seen Abraham?"

"I can assure you," He answered, "before Abraham so much as existed, I am." This was a claim to share in the very name by which God had described Himself to Moses, and they took up stones from the Temple courtyard to stone Him to death for the blasphemy. But Jesus evaded them, and mingling with the crowd, went away.

Outside the Temple precincts, He came upon a man blind from birth whom He healed. The news of such a miracle in crowded Jerusalem rapidly spread, filling the people with astonishment and admiration. The Pharisees, however, were filled with consternation. They sent for the man, and unable to shake his testimony, abused him. The man sought out Jesus to tell Him of this, and Jesus said to him, in the presence of some Pharisees: "I am come into this world, that they who see not, may see; and they who see, may become blind."

The Pharisees who heard Him asked: "Are we blind?" Jesus declared that they were deliberately so, and therefore guilty in the sight of God.

JUDEAN MINISTRY

Leaving Jerusalem, He went home to His friends at Bethany. During a brief stay there, He preached to the country people round about, and such visitors from Jerusalem as happened to be present.

He told the people that He was the door to the true sheepfold. Only through Him could they enter upon the way that led to salvation. Yet more, He was the Good Shepherd who was prepared to give His life for His sheep. In fact, He would do so, and

voluntarily; although afterwards He would rise from the dead.

His words were carried back to Jerusalem, where they caused much discussion; and opinions concerning Him were more divided than ever.

He now went farther afield, and during the next two months taught in various country villages throughout Judea and Perea. He also chose and sent seventy-two disciples to help in the work.

The doctrines taught were concerning the Kingdom of God in general, but more specifically the fatherhood of God, the necessity of prayer, the generous fulfillment of duties, the obligation of fraternal charity, and the final judgment in which the reward of eternal happiness or the punishment of eternal misery will be the lot of each man according to his deserts.

When the disciples came back to Him full of enthusiasm and with reports of the great success which had attended their labors, He said: "Blessed are the eyes which see the things you see, and the ears which hear the things you have heard."

To this period belongs the expression of His own great love for men, when He spoke those memorable words: "Come to Me, all you that labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you. Take up My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you shall find rest to your souls. For My yoke is sweet, and My burden light."

All through, too, He manifested His constant spirit of communion with the heavenly Father He so loved, giving Himself to such prolonged and fervent prayer that His Apostles, observing Him, felt that they had never known what it really is to pray. So they asked Him to teach them also to pray.

It was in response to this request that He taught them the prayer, as sublime as it is simple: "Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

THE SUPREME DECLARATION

In the following December Jesus went back to Jerusalem for the Feast of the Dedication, which commemorated the deliverance of the Temple in 165 A.D. from the desecration to which it had been subjected by Antiochus Epiphanes some five years earlier. Antiochus was a tyrant who had tried to stamp out Judaism and impose upon the people his own Greek paganism.

Arriving shortly before the Feast, Jesus stayed once more with His friends Lazarus, Martha and Mary, at Bethany, two miles outside the city. Then, on the festival day itself, He went to pay His visit to the Temple.

As soon as He appeared there, the people at once gathered around Him. But the Pharisees were there also; and they were determined to force Him to say openly whether or not He claimed to be the promised Messiah. So they threw the challenge at Him: "How long are you going to keep us in suspense? If you are the Messiah, say so straight out."

Jesus answered that whatever He might say they would not believe Him, but that the miracles He had wrought in the name of His Father were evidence enough of His divine mission. Then he added the momentous words: "I and the Father are one."

The implications of this were only too clear, and at once the Pharisees took up stones from the courtyard to stone Him.

But Jesus challenged them in turn, saying that He had done many good works that only God could do. "For which of My good works," He asked, "do you stone Me?"

"Not for any good works," they shouted, "but for blasphemy, because, being a man, you make yourself God."

Dropping the stones, they made a concerted rush towards Him, intent on arresting Him; but once more He escaped them by losing Himself in the surging throng, left the Temple courtyard, and Jerusalem itself, setting out at once, not back to Bethany, but to the far side of the Jordan some twenty miles away, near to the place where John the Baptist had first commenced his mission.

But He went in tears, saying: "Jerusalem, Jerusalem. You kill the prophets, and stone them that are sent to you. How often would I have gathered your children as the hen her chickens under her wing, and you would not!"

RAISING OF LAZARUS

The next three months Jesus spent in Perea, teaching, doing good always, and making many converts.

The Pharisees, however, constantly dogged His footsteps; and one day a group of them told Him to get out of Perea because Herod Antipas, who was Governor of Perea as well as of Galilee, was planning to kill Him.

No thought of His welfare made the Pharisees warn Him. Full of envy and hatred, they thought that the threat might at least put an end to His present work, impelling Him to go elsewhere.

But He merely replied to them: “Go and tell that fox I shall continue My work until it is time for Me to go to Jerusalem. If a prophet is to perish, it can only be in that city. Yet when I do go there, I will be met with the cry of welcome: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.”

At last came a call of charity which He could not refuse. Messengers came from Martha and Mary at Bethany to say that their brother Lazarus was dangerously ill. The message sent by the sisters was merely: “Lord, he whom You love is sick.” They knew that they need not say more.

But Jesus was well aware that whilst the couriers were making their twenty-mile journey Lazarus had died; and He deliberately allowed two further days to elapse before saying to His Apostles: “Let us go into Judea again.” They reminded Him of the plots to kill Him there; but it was in vain, and seeing His determination to go, Thomas said to the others: “Let us also go, and die with Him.”

Lazarus had already been four days in the grave as they approached Bethany, and Martha, hearing of His coming, went to meet Him with the tearful words: “Lord, had You been here, my brother would not have died.” Her sister Mary came also, when told Jesus was asking for her, and said practically the same words. The two sisters had probably said repeatedly to each other that had Jesus been there, He would never have let their brother die.

At His request, they took Him to the cave where Lazarus was entombed, and He told the men present to remove the stone covering the entrance to it. Then, after a prayer to His Father, He commanded Lazarus to return to life and come out from the grave. Lazarus at once did so, to the immense excitement of all who witnessed it, and the conversion of most of them. Not, however, of all. Some hurried to Jerusalem and informed the Pharisees, who immediately demanded a meeting of the Sanhedrin or Supreme Council of the Jews.

The meeting of the Sanhedrin was held in the house of Caiaphas, the High Priest for that year. All agreed that something had to be done. If Jesus was allowed to continue with such impressive confirmations of His teaching, all would eventually believe in Him. The Romans might even step in and reduce them to absolute slavery, taking away all their present privileges.

The discussion went on until Caiaphas put an end to it by saying: “There is only one thing to do. It is better for Him to die than for the whole nation to perish.”

Jesus was doomed. But they could not lay hands upon Him for the moment. He had left Bethany and gone into the desert country some miles North, near Ephraim. The Sanhedrin could but make their plans for His death, issuing orders that anyone knowing where He was to be found should immediately inform them.

LAST MISSIONARY DAYS

Jesus did not stay at Ephraim. He spent some three weeks journeying through Samaria, Galilee and Perea. His movements were reported to the members of the Sanhedrin, in Jerusalem; but He was always moving, and they could bide their time.

Wherever He went Pharisees were in attendance, and He had many skirmishes with them. On one occasion they brought up the important question of marriage and divorce. In response to their declaration that the Law of Moses permitted a man to put away his wife and marry another, He told them uncompromisingly that Moses had never really meant to approve of such laxity, but had merely tolerated the practice because of their lack of good dispositions. Such laxity, He said, was quite against God’s original intentions. Nor could it be tolerated henceforth. “From now on,” He proclaimed, “if a man puts away his wife and marries another, he commits adultery. And if the woman who is put away marries another, she commits adultery.”

That sounded severe even to the Apostles, but they knew that if He spoke in such a way, it was a sheer matter of principle. They had too many evidences of His gentleness and mercy to think otherwise.

Thus, about this same time, He healed the ten lepers who cried out to Him so movingly: “Jesus, Master, have pity on us.”

So, too, He blessed the little children some women brought to Him, despite the efforts of the Apostles to prevent them from bothering Him. “Suffer the little children to come unto Me and forbid them not,” He said, “for of such is the Kingdom of God.”

One day, as they were approaching Jericho and getting ever nearer to Jerusalem, He told the Apostles what would happen to Him there. He would be arrested, condemned, mocked, spat upon, and put to death; but on the third day He would rise again. He had warned them so often of these things, but still they could make nothing of it all. It seemed so unreal.

Two of them, however, felt at least that the climax was approaching and that the Kingdom for which Jesus had been so long preparing them was at hand. So they begged Him to grant them the privilege of sitting, one on His right and the other on His left, when the glorious Kingdom would at last be His. In reply, Jesus asked them if they were willing to share in His sufferings, and on receiving their answer in the affirmative said: “That at least I can promise you, but not more. What you have asked rests not with Me but with My Father in Heaven.” Then to all twelve He spoke seriously on the necessity of humility.

When they entered Jericho, He asked the publican Zacchaeus, a local customs’ officer, for hospitality. Zacchaeus, who was not very tall, had climbed into a tree to get a glimpse of Jesus over the heads of the crowd who had gathered for the occasion; and Jesus singled him out as a sincere and honest man despite the fact that the Pharisees regarded him as a sinner.

Next day, as He was leaving the town, He was accosted by Bartimeus, a blind man. Bartimeus had been told that the noise of the crowd was because Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. Again and again, therefore, the blind man cried out: “Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me.” In vain others told him to be quiet. Impressed by the man’s faith and perseverance, Jesus stopped, ordered the man to be brought to Him, asked what he wanted, and bestowed upon him the gift of sight that he so desired.

BANQUET AT BETHANY

It was only about twenty miles to Bethany from Jericho, and when Jesus came into the little town on the Friday afternoon, just six days before the Passover, He was welcomed by all. Only a month ago He had raised Lazarus, so well-known and popular with everybody, from the dead.

A wealthy citizen named Simon even put on a banquet for Him and for His Apostles, inviting Lazarus, Martha and Mary to be present also.

During the course of the evening, in the presence of the whole company, Mary gave expression to her reverence, love and gratitude by lavishing upon the head and feet of Jesus a most costly and refreshing perfume. This greatly distressed Judas, who protested against such waste, saying that the precious ointment could have been sold for some fifty or sixty dollars, and the money given to the poor. But Jesus defended her. “The poor you have always with you,” He said, “but not Myself. She has done well, preparing My body beforehand for burial. And I tell you that wherever the gospel is preached in the world, what she has done will be recalled in memory of her.”

Judas, however, was anything but appeased; He had been repelled by what he had seen. The loss of the money rankled. Thoughts of selling the precious ointment began to yield place in his mind to thoughts of selling something infinitely more precious, Jesus Himself.

During these days Jerusalem was seething with excitement. Caravans of pilgrims were pouring in every day from everywhere for the Passover. On the hillsides round about tents were pitched, and daily the crowds from them went into the Holy City. Many Galileans were amongst them. All the talk was of Jesus, and above all of the miracle He had wrought a month ago, the raising of Lazarus from the dead. People, coming and going, thronged the two miles of road between Jerusalem and Bethany. So many of them wanted to see Lazarus with their own eyes.

PALM SUNDAY

It was into the midst of all this excitement that Jesus had come on the Friday of His arrival at Bethany, and He determined to go on to Jerusalem after the Sabbath, on the first day of the week. But, unlike previous visits, this one was to take the form of a public entry into the City. He, therefore, sent two of His disciples to a nearby village to bring back a donkey’s foal which He said they would find tethered there, and which the owner would gladly let them have.

The news that He was coming in such a way quickly spread, even to Jerusalem itself; and as He rode up the hillside towards the city, the people came to meet the miracle-worker from Nazareth, waving palms and crying out: “Welcome. Hosanna to the Son of David. Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the Highest!”

It was in vain that angry priests and Pharisees bade the people stop, asking what they meant by it. “This is Jesus the Prophet, from Nazareth in Galilee,” they said, and went on with their demonstrations of joy. The Pharisees then turned to Jesus. “It is for you to stop all this,” they said. “Bid them cease.” “If I did,” He replied, “the very stones would cry out.”

As a sudden turn in the road brought the city into sight Jesus was moved to tears. Here He was, publicly accepting the role of the Messiah, yet knowing that within a few days He would be as emphatically rejected. “If you but knew,” He said, half-aloud, “the things that are to your peace. But now they are hidden from you. There will not be left in you a stone upon a stone, because you have not known the time of your visitation.”

Entering into the teeming city, He visited the Temple to give Himself to prayer. But the priests and Pharisees said to one another angrily: “We have accomplished nothing. The whole world seems to have gone after Him.” They therefore held another meeting to consider what next move they should make.

No further developments took place that day in Jerusalem; and, having looked round on what He saw there, Jesus returned in the evening to Bethany. It was little more than half-an-hour’s walk.

SECOND CLEANSING OF THE TEMPLE

Next day, Monday, He went back to the city with the twelve. On the way, coming upon a fig-tree in full leaf, but bearing no fruit, He wrought His only miracle of judgment, condemning it to death. On the following day, to their astonishment, the Apostles noticed that it had completely withered away. The incident was a kind of acted parable, a “visual-aid” in the religious education of the Apostles, teaching them the fate that awaited Jerusalem itself, so splendid in promise yet so disappointing in results.

In the city He found the Temple precincts once more turned into a marketplace, with beasts and birds for sale and booths set up for changing the various moneys of pilgrims from different localities. Again, therefore, He drove them all out, declaring the Temple to be A House of Worship, not to be desecrated by such trafficking. Had the offenders refused to go, Jesus and His handful of disciples could not have expelled them by physical force, short of a miracle. But the moral authority and blazing indignation of Jesus were more than they could resist. Naturally, the Chief Priests were furious; but Jesus had received such a wonderful welcome from the people the day before that they could not arrest Him publicly.

He spent the rest of the day teaching in the Temple without interruption, save for one incident only.

Some small children came in whilst He was speaking, and recognizing Him as the central figure of the procession of the day before, began to chant the words they had then heard: “Hosanna to the Son of David!” The Temple authorities, unable to bear it, said to Him: “Don’t you hear what they are singing?” “Yes,” He replied. “But have you never read that God has inspired the perfection of praise from the lips of babes and sucklings?”

That night He again spent at Bethany, returning to the city on Tuesday morning.

DAY OF QUESTIONS

The Chief Priests and others had had time to think things over, and when He began teaching again in the Temple they interrupted Him, demanding to know by what authority He took such duties upon Himself.

He retorted with another question. “From whom did John the Baptist receive his authority?” They were reduced to silence. For if they said that John the Baptist had no authority, they would have angered the people who regarded him as a prophet of God. If, on the other hand, they said from God, the reply would have been: “Then why did you not obey Him?”

Taking advantage of their discomfiture, Jesus then preached the parables of the “Two Sons” (*Matthew 21:28-32*); of the “Wicked Husbandmen” (*Luke 20:9-18*); and of the “Wedding Feast.” (*Matthew 22:1-14*). All three parables predicted God’s rejection of the Jews as His chosen people, and the bestowal of their inheritance upon the Gentiles.

Enraged by these, the Pharisees sought to get Him into trouble with the Roman authorities by asking whether or not it was lawful to pay tribute to Caesar? They gained nothing by that, for He replied simply: “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.”

The Sadducees then put a captious question about marriage in Heaven which Jesus summarily dismissed by saying that in Heaven there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage, conditions there being quite different from those on earth.

The Pharisees then tried again by asking which is the greatest commandment? Jesus replied that the first is to love God, and that the second is to love one's neighbor—a love they certainly were not then manifesting!

After that there were no more questions, but Jesus went on to warn the people against the hypocrisy of the Scribes and Pharisees. These took His words as a declaration of open war; and Jesus knew that He had virtually pronounced His own death-sentence.

As He was leaving the Temple, never to enter it again, He saw a poor widow put two mites into a collection-box for the upkeep of the Temple. How small an offering that was can be realized from the fact that eight mites would be equal to a single cent! Yet Jesus praised her sacrificial giving, saying that she merited more than all the others because she had given all she had.

A little later, however, He predicted to His Apostles the total ruin of the Temple despite its vast stones and solid structure.

Going home to Bethany, He broke the journey by going to Mt. Olivet, taking apart with Him His Apostles Peter, James and John, to whom He spoke at great length about the Last Judgment.

JUDAS THE BETRAYER

Next day, Wednesday, Jesus spent in retirement with His Apostles, possibly in Bethany, probably out in the nearby hills. These were the last hours of spiritual preparation, and during them He told them clearly once more: "It is but two days to the Passover. Then I shall be given up to be crucified."

One Apostle, however, was missing for some hours on that day. He had gone alone to Jerusalem, where the Sanhedrin was holding a meeting in the morning, trying to decide what to do about Jesus. The members were worried by the number of His friends who had come in from the country areas. But, to their delight, Judas came to them, asking what they would give him if he would inform them where they could find Jesus away from the usual crowds. They agreed to give him thirty pieces of silver, possibly equal to between fifteen and twenty dollars in our money. It must have seemed a rather poor bargain, but still Judas accepted it. He had been disgusted by the way in which Jesus had failed again and again to assert Himself as the Messiah-King of Jewish nationalist aspirations when opportunities had presented themselves.



Communion of the Apostles, by Fra Angelico

THE LAST SUPPER

On Thursday, Jesus sent Peter and John into the city to arrange for the use of an upper room in the house of a friend where He could celebrate the Passover meal with His Apostles that evening; and in due time all came to the house, including Judas.

Before the meal began, having in mind the many times the Apostles had disputed about “who would be the greater,” He gave them a supreme lesson in humility by girding Himself with a towel and then, taking a bowl of water, kneeling like a household slave to wash their feet.

After that, He proceeded with the supper, during which He warned them that one of them was about to betray Him. Judas went away, to tell the Temple guards to be ready for the moment when he would notify them. It would be soon. Jesus was at supper with His Apostles in the house of a friend, he told them. They would be able to arrest Him without any public disturbance after He had left the premises.

When Judas had gone—as seems more probably the case—Jesus proceeded to fulfill the promise He had made a year earlier of giving His flesh to eat and His blood to drink. Taking bread, He said: “Take and eat. This is My body which is given for you. Do this in commemoration of Me.” Then, taking wine: “This is My blood of the New Covenant, which shall be shed for many unto the remission of sins.”

Thus He gave the sign of His own Priesthood according to the order of Melchisedech, who had offered sacrifice in bread and wine; and also made the Apostles priests according to that same order. So, too, He left to His Church the Sacrifice of the Mass, of which St. Paul was later to write: “As often as you shall eat this bread and drink the chalice, you shall show the death of the Lord until He comes.” (*1 Cor.* 11:26).

After this, Jesus spoke for some hours to His Apostles, until nearly midnight, comforting them, promising them the Holy Spirit for their future work, telling them that they would be united with Him as living branches are united with a vine, and concluding with a priestly prayer for the unity of His Church, impressing on them the wonderful relationships of Himself with His Father, and of themselves with Him.

A hymn of thanksgiving followed, then He left the house with His Apostles, and set out with them from Jerusalem along the Bethany road to His favorite Mt. Olivet. There He went into a garden called Gethsemane, where He went apart from the Apostles with the exception of Peter, James and John whom He took with Him. These three were allowed to witness, as He knelt in prayer, something of the sorrow with which He was afflicted by the weight of the sins of the world, the burden of which forced from Him a very sweat of blood.

ARREST AND TRIAL

It was in the garden of Gethsemane that Judas, coming with the Temple guards, found Him.

The Apostles fled.

Jesus, arrested, was taken first to Annas, a former High Priest, who had no authority, but who wanted to examine Him in order to think out the best charge to bring against Him. Annas then sent Him to his son-in-law, Caiaphas, the actually ruling High Priest, who had already decided that it was better that Jesus should die than that the whole nation should perish.

It was now daylight, on Friday morning. The Sanhedrin had gathered quickly. Many professional informers were called to give evidence before the Jewish tribunal, but their accusations were so conflicting and so palpably false that Caiaphas set them all aside, and took things in hand himself.

He put a direct question to Jesus, bidding Him in the name of the Living God to say whether or not He claimed to be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus replied that He did, and that one day they would see Him coming again in the clouds of heaven. It was clear that He was declaring Himself to be equal with God, and Caiaphas turned to his fellow-members of the Sanhedrin. “You have all heard that blasphemy,” he said. “There’s no need of other evidence. What do you say?” All agreed that the death-sentence should be pronounced.

During these proceedings two of the Apostles, Peter and John, had plucked up courage enough to come to the courtyard of the High Priest’s house; but there, when recognized, Peter was terrified and three times denied, even with an oath, that he so much as knew Jesus. The crowing of a cock brought home to him the prediction of Jesus that he would do this; and going out he wept bitterly. For the moment he did not remember, although he did so later, that even when predicting his fall, Jesus had also

said: "I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith fail not; and after your conversion, it will be for you to strengthen your brethren."

The Sanhedrin, forbidden by the Roman authorities to inflict the death-penalty themselves, took Jesus to Pilate, the Governor of Judea, accusing Him of advising people not to pay taxes to Caesar, of proclaiming Himself King, and of inciting the people to rebellion.

Pilate did not believe them; tried to escape condemning Jesus by sending Him to Herod Antipas, Governor of Galilee, who happened then to be in Jerusalem; and, when that expedient failed, together with all persuasive measures to placate the Jews, handed Him over to them to be crucified.

Before doing so, however, he washed his hands in their presence, declaring himself "innocent of the blood of this just man." In a frenzy of triumph the mob, incited by the Jewish priests, cried out: "His blood be upon us and upon our children."

Then they made Jesus carry His own cross to Calvary.



Crucifixion, by Fra Angelico

DEATH ON CALVARY

Nailed to the cross, Jesus endured for three hours the ignominious and agonizing tortures of crucifixion, with a placard above His head, to the mortification of the Jews but insisted upon by Pilate, proclaiming Him as “Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.”

Seven of His utterances from the cross have been preserved for us. He prayed for the forgiveness of His persecutors; promised paradise to the repentant thief who, together with another criminal, was crucified beside Him; entrusted His Mother to the care of St. John; expressed His own mental and bodily distress in the cry: “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me,” and in the words: “I thirst”; and then, after declaring that all had been “accomplished,” His final, strong and confident declaration: “Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit.”

So, at 3 p.m., on that Friday afternoon, Jesus died.

Nature itself paid the tribute His own people had refused. The sun was darkened, whilst the earth quaked, rending the Veil of the Temple and splitting open the tombs. The Jews were terrified and fled, beating their breasts. Even the Roman centurion exclaimed: “Indeed this man was the Son of God.”

The High Priests were not less terrified by these things than the others, but they were obsessed by yet another and greater fear. Jesus had said that He would rise again on the third day. They did not believe it possible; but they were determined to take precautions against any removal of His body by His disciples, with a subsequent claim that the prophecy had been fulfilled.

At sunset the Sabbath would begin. They must get everything done by then. At their request, the Roman soldiers hastened the death of the two thieves by breaking their legs; but when they came to Jesus, they found Him already dead. Still, to make sure, a soldier thrust a spear into His side. The bodies were taken down, and Pilate granted permission to Joseph of Arimathea to give honorable burial to that of Jesus. One concession he made to the Jewish priests. They could seal the stone at the entrance to the vault, and get Roman guards to remain on watch until after the third day, preventing any interference with it.



Entombment, by Fra Angelico

RISEN AND LIVING STILL

Any ordinary biography would here come to an end. Impressed by the goodness, magnificent courage and unselfish devotedness of such a life as has been described, people might think the end to have been one of sheer tragedy; yet none the less it would be the end of but one more great man who had played his part on the stage of human history.

In the case of Jesus, however, things are very different.

Shortly before dawn on the third day, Sunday, an earthquake dislodged the stone from the entrance to the tomb in which he had been buried; and the Roman soldiers on guard were terrified not only by that, but by the apparition of an angel, luminously brilliant. They fell to the ground unconscious and when they revived, fled.

The displacing of the stone was not in order to allow Jesus to emerge from the tomb. He had already risen when that happened. But Mary Magdalen and the other women who came just before sunrise were thus enabled to see that the tomb was empty. The angel, still there, invited them to do so. "See the place where the Lord was laid," he said to them.

"He is not here, for He is risen, as He said. Go quickly and tell His disciples."

It was true. The disciples, however, were slow to believe. But during the next forty days, at various times and in different places, Jesus appeared to them, singly and in groups.

He continued instructing them, explaining to two of them, on the road to Emmaus, how all that Moses and the prophets had predicted of the Messiah had been fulfilled in Him.

Appearing in the midst of them, when they were gathered together in Jerusalem, He bestowed upon them the power to forgive sins, breathing upon them and saying: "Receive the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you forgive, are forgiven them."

On another occasion, in Galilee, He confirmed Peter in his office as supreme head of the Church on earth, after exacting from him a threefold profession of love as reparation for the threefold denial. To him Jesus confided the care of lambs and sheep alike, the whole flock; and promised him the crown of martyrdom in the end.

Fittingly in Galilee also, where He had first called them as Apostles, He gave them His great commission, saying: "All power is given to Me in heaven and on earth. Going, therefore, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and behold, I am with you all days even till the end of the world."

His last appearance to them came shortly afterwards in Jerusalem. In that final interview, having given them further instructions about His Church as the Kingdom of God in this world, He told them to remain in the city until the Holy Ghost descended upon them as He had promised. After that, they were to begin their apostolate of preaching the gospel throughout the world, even to the uttermost parts of the earth.

Now the time had come for Him to return to the Heaven from which He came. Accompanied by them all, He set out on the road towards Bethany and the Mount of Olives. When they had ascended the mountain, He blessed them, and as He did so began to ascend above and beyond this world. For a few moments only they saw Him going. Then a cloud suddenly formed beneath Him, cutting Him off from their gaze.

As they continued looking upwards, two men in white robes appeared to them and told them that Jesus had finally gone from them, but that He would come again some day even as they had seen Him go. Strangely, they felt no trace of sadness at His departure, but went back to Jerusalem with great joy, there to persevere in prayer and to wait until endued with power from on high.

Nine days later, on Pentecost Sunday, the promised Holy Spirit descended upon them. Peter, chief of the Apostles, preached the first sermon that very day in Jerusalem, and some three thousand souls were received into the Church.

And that Church—the Catholic Church—which has been in the world all days since then, and is still with us, the living witness reaching back through the ages, makes us one with those who heard Jesus speak and who saw the things He did; and no more than they can we doubt the reality of the experiences that were theirs.

To us, as to St. Peter, Jesus is "the Christ, the Son of the Living God." Of Him, with St. John, we have no choice but to say: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us; and we saw His glory, the glory as it were of the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."



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The Following Litany is an Excerpt from the Book:

A Prayerbook of Favorite Litanies

116 Catholic Litanies
and Responsory Prayers



Compiled by
Father Albert J. Hebert, S.M.

"And leaving them, he went again: and he prayed the third time, saying the selfsame word."
- Matthew 26:44

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PUBLISHER'S PREFACE

This book was conceived to be a prayerbook, rather than a book for scholarly purposes. Therefore, to serve as such, it must be used again and again so that one gains familiarity with the litanies and prayers it contains.

Litanies, as prayers, possess two peculiar aspects. First, a person must be familiar with the litany being prayed in order for it to be profoundly and powerfully recited. It must—as with any well-said vocal prayer—be completely known to its user and contain no surprises, for surprises distract a person from attention to his prayer. Therefore, one must recite a litany again and again for it to acquire this power within his prayer life.

And second, a litany, by the very variety of its expression, remains ever new. Whereas at first thought, one might judge the recitation of a litany to become quickly boring and flat, just the opposite is true. A litany ever reveals to the reciter new insights and new channels of devotion. Much like a many-faceted gem, a litany reflects its light—first from one angle, then from another—with an almost supernatural charm and freshness.

From these observations it is obvious that with time one should adopt favorite litanies, which he will then incorporate into his daily prayer. Litanies said as prayer bring a wonderful variety to one's daily prayer routine and beautifully complement meditation, the Rosary and other vocal prayers.

Finally, the litanies in this book have been arranged for recitation by two or more persons, with the responses being in italics. It is strongly urged that this book be employed for group prayer, in addition to personal use. There is a litany here for just about every conceivable need or purpose.

May this beautiful book of litanies become a priceless source of inspiration, instruction and grace to those who possess it, and may it be spread far and wide throughout the Catholic world, to the greater honor and glory of Almighty God and of His Blessed Mother Mary, His angels and His saints.

- Thomas A. Nelson Original Publisher November 28, 1984

LITANY OF SAINT TERESA OF AVILA

The Glory of Spain

(For private use only.)

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us. Christ, hear us.

Christ, graciously hear us.

God the Father of Heaven,

Have mercy on us.

God the Son, Redeemer of the world,

Have mercy on us.

God the Holy Ghost, the Sanctifier,

Have mercy on us.

Holy Trinity, One God,

Have mercy on us.

Holy Mary, Mother of God, *pray for us.*

Holy Mary, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, *pray for us.*

Saint Teresa of Avila, *etc.*

St. Teresa, whose heart was transverberated by the love of God,

St. Teresa, most humble servant of God,

St. Teresa, most zealous for the glory of God,

St. Teresa, woman truly strong in mind,

St. Teresa, truly detached from all created objects,

St. Teresa, great light of the Catholic Church,

St. Teresa, reformer and glory of the Carmelite Order,

St. Teresa, queen of mystical theology,

St. Teresa, lustrous name of Avila and Spain,

St. Teresa, who didst forever glorify the name of Teresa,

St. Teresa, wishing to suffer or to die,

St. Teresa, exclaiming, "O Lord, how sweet and pleasing are Thy ways!"

St. Teresa, desiring so much the salvation of souls,

St. Teresa, tasting and seeing how sweet is the Lord, even in this vale of miseries,

St. Teresa, exclaiming, "O death, who can fear thee who art the way to true life!"

St. Teresa, true lover of the Cross of Christ,

St. Teresa, who didst live to love, who died to love, and who wilt love eternally,

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world,

Spare us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world,

Hear us, O Lord.

Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world,

Have mercy on us.

V. Pray for us, O holy Saint Teresa,

R. *That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.*

LET US PRAY

O God, Who didst replenish the heart of Thy blessed servant St. Teresa with the treasures of Thy divine love, grant that, like her, we may love Thee and suffer all things for Thee and in union with Thee, that we may gain souls for Thee, and that we may secure the salvation of our own soul. This we beg through the merits of our Saviour and the intercession of Thy glorious virgin Teresa. R. *Amen.*

St. Teresa of Avila, Foundress, Mystic, and Doctor of the Church: Born in 1515 at Avila, Spain, St. Teresa (of Jesus) is one of the greatest women the world has ever known. She entered the Carmelite convent at age 21, and with the help of St. John of the Cross and St. Peter of Alcantara she reformed most of the Carmelite convents in Spain and founded 16 new ones. She attained the highest degree of mystical life and wrote several classics of spiritual literature: *The Life of Teresa of Jesus* (her autobiography), *The Way of Perfection*, and *The Interior Castle*. St. Teresa of Avila died in 1582. She was the first woman to be declared a Doctor of the Church.

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